DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 249 294 UD 023 438

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TITLE	Refugee Resettlement Programs and Techniques.
INSTITUTION	Michigan State Univ., East Lansing. Resource Center for Refugee Settlement.
SPONS AGENCY	Congress of the U.S., Washington, D.C. Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy.
PUB DATE	Sep 80
CONTRACT	SCIRP-07031274-16
NOTE	140p.; Best available copy; Pages 119-131 have very light type.
PUB TYPE	Reports - General (140)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Acculturation; Adjustment (to Environment); *Agency Role; Cubans; Employment Opportunities; *Government Role; Haitians; Indochinese; Jews; Job Placement; *Refugees; Relocation; Social Attitudes; Social Behavior; *Social Integration; Social Services
IDENTIFIERS	*Refugee Assistance; *Refugee Resettlement

ABSTRACT

This report on refugee resettlement programs and techniques addresses two central issues: (1) what kinds of assistance should be made available by the Federal government to incoming refugees; and (2) which services in the public and private sectors have been most effective in helping refugees to achieve self sufficiency? Chapter I provides a brief introduction to the problems of refugee resettlement. Chapter II examines the characteristics, experiences, and resettlement needs of the various groups (Soviet Jews, Cubans, Haitians, and Indochinese) being resettled in the United States; in particular, the behavior of refugees as they go through the migration and resettlement experience is explored. Chapter III focuses on the major resettlement agencies and organizations, especially the Federal and State governments and local and voluntary agencies; attention also is given to the resettlement process itself, including both the prearrival stage and the process of domestic resettlement after arrival. Chapter IV examines how the system operates when agencies and refugees interact. The major issues and problems of refugee settlement--support services, cash and medical assistance, and the need to develop a coordinated and comprehensive resettlement system--are analyzed here. Finally, Chapter V briefly discusses previous hearings and studies on U.S. refugee resettlement programs and makes recommendations as to how the country should resettle future waves of refugees. (GC)

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ED249294

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMS AND TECHNIQUES

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a research report submitted to:

THE SELECT COMMISSION ON IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE POLICY
(Research contract #SCIRP-07031274-16)

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September 1980

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SUMMARY AND MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

This report on refugee resettlement programs and techniques examines three aspects of refugee resettlement: the refugees, especially their behavior during resettlement; the main resettlement agencies and organizations, especially the Federal government, the voluntary agencies, state governments, and local resettlement agencies; and the resettlement process itself. In Chapter IV these three factors are brought together to examine their interactions and the main problems and issues of refugee resettlement. In approaching the question of how to improve refugee resettlement the report focuses on the interaction of two key parts of the resettlement process--the refugees' behavior, especially their expectations, and the failure of the resettlement agencies on all levels to produce a comprehensive coordinated approach to resettlement.

The study of refugee behavior during resettlement indicates that refugees start with unrealistic rose-colored expectations and the belief that they are owed something and should be compensated for their unjust suffering. Additionally, the trauma of the refugee experience has made refugees more aggressive, demanding, and resourceful. When they are disillusioned by their rate of progress or don't get what they believe is their due, refugees become suspicious and bitter of the helping agencies. Refugees are also inexperienced, confused, and uncertain about how to behave in their new society. Lastly, the report emphasizes the importance of the refugee community's advice to newcomers as contrasted to the resettlement agencies' preferences. In sum, refugee resettlement behavior is often aggressive, resourceful, demanding, suspicious, and based on unrealistic expectations.

The report also emphasizes another side to refugee behavior that has been inadequately utilized and captured in resettlement programs. This is the refugee's drive to succeed, to recapture his lost status, his willingness to take risks, adopt new behaviors and expectations, and work exceedingly hard to build a new life.

Confronting these behaviors is a confused and divided resettlement system. Patchwork, ad hoc, temporary, uncoordinated, are terms commonly used to describe the resettlement system. There is the barest agreement on an ill-defined common goal, self-sufficiency, and no agreement at all on the proper means for achieving that goal. The system is not comprehensive or coordinated. Each agency follows its own philosophy, and offers its own approach and mix of services, often with major variations within the same agency.

The report identifies the key problem thusly:

> Refugees are survivors. The refugee experience makes many refugees aggressive and demanding. Further, many refugees are suspicious of those who assist them and are always looking for ways to get more benefits. Refugees develop communication networks and rapidly become "street-wise," engaging in comparison shopping and a search for services. Despite their communication difficulties they often develop skills that would put jailhouse lawyers to shame. This is not meant as criticism, such behaviors can be vital to survival during flight or in refugee camps. In resettlement, these behaviors are undesirable when used to "beat the system." They can be functional and successful behaviors if directed with the system.
>
> If the resettlement agencies are confused about what they are doing, if they contradict one another, if they offer a mix of services and alternative paths to self-sufficiency, then we should not be surprised when the refugees figure out the worst and most expensive, from our perspective, path and mix. If we cannot achieve consensus on how to resettle refugees, then the refugees will design their own system, to our dismay. (p. 86.)

To improve the refugee resettlement system we must do three things: (1) develop a coordinated system; (2) have that system decide the approach to be followed at all levels of resettlement; and, (3) reduce the choices available to the refugees in the early stage of resettlement while making it clear to the refugees what expectations we have for them. The report offers suggestions on how to achieve coordination and offers what is believed to be the most effective approach to resettlement.

To achieve coordination it is recommended that the American Council of Voluntary Agencies (ACVA) should have the major coordinating role and should make the basic decisions regarding the actual process of resettlement. ACVA should be strengthened by establishment of a Refugee Resettlement Bureau with an Executive Director, and staff, with power to engage in binding negotiations with the Federal and state governments. The Bureau should set strict resettlement standards for the voluntary agencies and police their performance. Further, the national voluntary agencies should exercise greater control over their sponsors and affiliates, requiring them to follow the chosen approach and to cooperate with other agencies and coordinating mechanisms on the local level.

The approach to resettlement that the report recommends and details is for intensive support services, especially English language (ESL) programs and vocational orientation, to be offered to the refugee immediately after arrival with a goal of getting refugees job-ready within six weeks to six months after arrival. Job refusals should be sanctioned by a cut-off of income assistance and of support services.

There must be follow-up services, especially English programs, employment counseling, and other employment upgrading services. Vocational training for refugees should be delayed until their English is at a level of vocational training-readiness that will permit refugees to take mainstream vocational training classes with only supplemental tutoring or English add-on. The report emphasizes that services, especially English programs, must be available for the duration of resettlement, and that in certain cases the Office of Refugee Resettlement should have the authority to provide services for up to five years.

Coordination and adoption of a uniform approach would still allow resettlement agencies flexibility in using their own unique blend of resources, but within clear limits. Additionally, these limits would indicate clearly to refugees what is expected of them and would reduce their options to play or beat the system.

The report further recommends that both models of cash and medical assistance currently in use--matching grants through voluntary agencies and public assistance through state welfare offices--be continued. Matching grants should be preferred for smaller refugee movements, but it is likely that public assistance would be necessary for very large movements. To improve the functioning of the welfare system the report recommends: dividing medical from cash assistance by giving refugees one year of automatic eligibility for medical assistance; setting a time limit of six months during which a refugee is able to remain eligible for public assistance through enrolling in approved training; permitting further training only if there is an employability plan and voluntary agency approval; applying job refusal sanctions; and requiring state welfare offices to notify voluntary agencies when granting cash assistance to refugees.

It is recommended that refugee clusters be facilitated and that efforts be made to promote development of refugee self-help organizations. It is also recommended that on a case-by-case basis in family reunions, U.S. relatives be expected to contribute to resettlement costs and services by providing orientation and initial housing, and by making in-kind and up-front cash contributions.

Lastly, the report recommends establishment of a national Resource Center for Refugee Resettlement and a Refugee Research Center. The resource center should gather materials and expertise from current programs and engage in contingency planning for the next refugee exodus. It should prepare outlines of materials to be used, so as to greatly speed production of orientation, English program, mental health, health, vocational, and adjustment materials once the identity of the refugee group is known. Research should be broadly based, using a general, historical, and comparative perspective which views refugees as recurring phenomena with identifiable and often identical patterns of behavior and sets of causalities.

Refugees should be viewed as New Americans, and on this basis it is in the interests of all that we should make every effort to improve our system of refugee resettlement.

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I

INTRODUCTION

This report to the Select Commission on Immigration and Refugee Policy on "Refugee Resettlement Programs and Techniques" is addressed to two issues:

(1) what kinds of assistance should be made available by the federal government to incoming refugees

(2) which services, in the public and private sectors, have been most effective in helping refugees achieve self-sufficiency

To understand the resettlement of refugees in the United States it is necessary to look at three separate aspects of the problem. First, in Chapter II, we examine the people being resettled, their characteristics, experiences, resettlement needs, and most importantly, their likely behavior as they go through the refugee experience.

Second, in Chapter III, we examine those who resettle refugees and describe the resettlement process, including both the prearrival stage of resettlement and the process of domestic resettlement after arrival. The major actors examined are the Federal government, the voluntary agencies, state governments, and local resettlement agencies.

The third look, in Chapter IV, is most important. This is an examination of how the system operates when the agencies and the refugees interact. The chapter will analyze the major issues and problems of refugee resettlement, particularly the questions of support services, cash and medical assistance, and the need to develop a coordinated and comprehensive resettlement system.

Chapter V contains recommendations for future refugee resettlement programs in the United States.

What is "refugee resettlement"? The goal of any refugee resettlement program is to quickly and humanely help the refugees to become productive and contributing members of their new society. The refugees' new life must consist of more than mere survival in dead-end jobs, substandard housing, and isolation from the community. They must be helped to overcome the disadvantages arising from being refugees and to have an opportunity to participate fully in our society. "Resettlement begins when the refugee ceases to regard his state of life as a purely temporary one and begins to plan for a future based on his present environment." "The process implies a pushing out of new roots, and an acceptance and nourishing of these roots by the new environment."[1] Successful resettlement will benefit not only the refugees but also their new country and the communities in which they resettle.

Having said the above we must, however, recognize that successful or satisfactory resettlement is undefined. This is because the many individuals and groups involved in resettlement (refugees, voluntary agencies, governments) have somewhat different perspectives which produce different definitions and criteria of success. The nature of the resettlement process itself also enhances the disagreements. Resettlement is an open-ended process. Is a refugee resettled when he is acculturated (can get around), adjusted (accepts his position), or assimilated (merged with the natives)? Some feel citizenship is resettlement, others feel that few first-generation refugees are ever resettled.

Both governments and voluntary agencies tend to have a shorter view of the resettlement process than is held by the refugees. Although the governments and agencies are aware of the long-term characteristics of adjustment to a new country, they view their involvement during the refugees' first three to five years here in terms of problems and criteria that focus on the refugees' self-sufficiency. From the government's viewpoint, reduction of the numbers of refugees receiving public assistance and improvements in their employment situation are the most important, although not exclusive, measures of success. For the voluntary agencies, self-sufficiency, both economic and social, is their goal; but often operational success is measured by disappearance of the problem--that is, reduction in the number of refugee demands and complaints. Once the refugees' needs for an income and initial housing are satisfied, the agencies find themselves under pressure to focus their energies on the next group that requires their services. For the refugee, the degree to which the quality of the new life approximates or surpasses that of the old life is a sign of success.

These differing goals and criteria produce clashes and problems for all involved. Each tends to view the others as overly demanding, unrealistic, and inadequate. In truth, however, the parties are closer to agreement than they realize. The governmental point of view, clearly expressed in the Refugee Act of 1980, is "to achieve economic self-sufficiency among refugees as quickly as possible." Taken in isolation, this is a harsh requirement, focused only on jobs and avoidance of welfare. Taken as part of the entire act and its legislative history, however, it becomes clear that the government is very greatly concerned with other aspects, including orientation, education, job training, medical screening, child welfare, and language programs. Assistance is available for up to three years and the goal is to produce satisfactory long-term refugee adjustment.

The voluntary agencies are in broad agreement with the government on the goals of resettlement. They don't set a three-year time limit, and they have a broader image of resettlement concerned with family, community, cultural pluralism, and many other refugee problems. The voluntary agencies, like the government, stress employment and self-sufficiency as the keys to successful resettlement:

> The major objective in resettlement is to help the refugee become self-sufficient (Church World Service)
>
> Prioritizing job placement (HIAS)
>
> Most refugees are best served by rapid integration into American working life (International Rescue Committee)
>
> The best assimilation takes place with immediate entrance to the employment market (World Relief Refugee Service)[2]

Unlike the government and the voluntary agencies, refugees are inexperienced with refugee resettlement. Their understanding of the resettlement process is colored by their immediate needs, long-term desires, cultural misperceptions, and emotional states. Especially during the early phase of resettlement, refugees have unrealistic and romantic expectations about their new life and an intense desire to recover all that has been lost. They believe and hope that after all they have suffered all will be well now. Unrealistically they expect to return to their former occupation and status, "to make a place for themselves and prove their worth."[3] At the same time, the refugees will be aggressive and demanding, constantly complaining about not receiving enough and wanting to be compensated for their trauma. Because of cultural differences the refugees often fail to understand the motives of those providing aid or to have a realistic view of the labor market and of the future course of their life in a new society.

Despite all these troubles the refugees share certain goals with the government and the voluntary agencies. They want jobs, they want to be self-sufficient, they don't want to be a burden. However, they lack experience with both resettlement and our society. They want their old positions back; but in reality lives torn apart are not easily repaired, and the total result of almost all refugee migrations is a decline from positions formerly held at home. Most refugees eventually do well compared to their condition upon arrival but not in light of their initial expectations. Refugees do well because eventually they adjust and try to rise on the "ladder of success." Initially, the American faith in and concept of upward mobility is alien to their backgrounds, and they fear they will be abandoned in entry-level jobs. The refugees share our goal of economic self-sufficiency, although they want more included in it, but they are aggressive and demanding, and suspiciously misunderstand our way of approaching the goal.

In sum, there are common criteria of successful resettlement. Employment and self-sufficiency are shared goals. Until the content of these terms is clearly defined and agreement is reached on means and methods, there will be the danger that a shared and achieveable goal will be lost because of squabbling and confusion.

II

THE REFUGEES

In order to design a better refugee resettlement system, it is necessary to understand refugees, their characteristics and experiences, their resettlement needs, and most important, how they are likely to behave during the resettlement process.

Refugee Characteristics

There is a tendency to view all refugees from a given country or region as a homogeneous group, to label them all Cubans or Indochinese and not to look beyond the label. Most refugee groups however, are subdivided into many waves and vintages that may differ greatly, have different experiences, and may even be hostile to one another.

There are several refugee associative patterns that are useful to the observer. Refugee "vintages" refer to the fact that those who leave a country at different points in time are fleeing from different pressures and have different backgrounds. As policies and conditions within the persecuting land shift, different refugee groups, or vintages, will flee. As Cuba moved from Batista to Communist rule, approximately fifteen distinct vintages fled in the first thirty months, and many of those in the later vintages had served in Castro's guerrilla forces. In the more compressed time span and acute movement associated with the collapse of Vietnam, many vintages came out simultaneously fleeing at the same time but from different fears.

> The record is clear that there has been little relationship between the categories of Vietnamese targeted for evacuation... and the refugees now under U.S. control.
> ...half the Vietnamese we intended to get out did not get out--and half who did get out, should not have.[4]

Just as departure from one's homeland may mark a refugee, so the arrival in "waves" in the new land may be of importance. Some 1975 Indochinese refugees found themselves in America in a span of days. Others who escaped at the same time languished for years in refugee camps before being admitted for resettlement here. Beyond the impact that the camp experience will have on the refugee, no one can contend that a 1980 Indochinese refugee goes through the same resettlement process as those in the 1975 wave.

The public title given to a refugee group - the Indochinese, the Cubans, the Soviet Jews - often masks great differences within the group. None of the 400,000 Indochinese refugees in the United States thinks of himself as "Indochinese." They are Vietnamese, ethnic Chinese, Laotian, Hmong, Khmer, etc. Some were high government officials and military leaders, others professionals and businessmen, and many were peasants, fishermen, and tribesmen. Similarly, Soviet Jewish refugees from different Republics have varying occupational backgrounds and religious attitudes.

The variety found within refugee movements can also be found among refugee groups. Refugee characteristics can be thought of as ranging along a continuum from traditional refugees to "new" refugees. This can be well illustrated by looking at the largest refugee groups entering the United States in the last year: Soviet Jewish refugees, Cuban refugees, Haitian refugees, and Indochinese refugees.

Traditional and "New" Refugees

Until the 1960's refugee resettlement was focused on traditional refugees--Europeans, primarily eastern Europeans, who were the products of the Cold War. Now the weight of concern and interest is shifting to the "new" refugees from Latin America, Asia, and Africa. The new element is not the presence of refugees in those regions, it is the great increase in their numbers and the fact that they are no longer dealt with solely within their home areas, but are now coming to North America, Europe, and Australia.

The key differences between the traditional and "new" refugees are that the "new" refugees are culturally and ethnically vastly different from their hosts, they come from less-developed countries, at a greatly different stage of development than the host, and they are likely to lack kin, potential support groups, in their country of resettlement. Traditional refugees, on the contrary, are culturally and ethnically similar to their host, come from societies whose levels of development are similar, and are likely to be welcomed and assisted by well-established kinfolk who know their language and can cushion their adjustment.

Soviet Jewish refugees are traditional refugees, Europeans with a higher average level of education than the typical American; their resettlement is being handled by the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) and the Council of Jewish Federations (CJF). While one should not minimize the cultural differences between the Soviet Union and the United States, most of the material aspects of our culture--appliances, subways, telephones, automobiles, clocks--are at least familiar to them. Many Soviet Jewish refugees start out in entry-level jobs, others are able to transfer their skills swiftly, and a few of the scholars and artists have been invited to join some of our most prominent institutions.

The recently arrived Cuban expellees tend toward the center of the refugee continuum. On the one hand, they have a European-derivative culture, ethnic kin in the United States, and a widely used and understood language. On the other, they are from a less developed country, with job skills and educations that may relegate many of them to long stays in entry-level jobs.

The "new" refugee is typified in the extreme by those among the Indochinese refugees whose backgrounds are most distant from our own. The Hmong refugees are preliterate tribesmen from Laos, lacking a written language (although most literate Hmong know Laotian), and come from a society at a much lower level of development than Cuba. The behavioral and material aspects of our culture are strange and alien to them. (They receive orientation about airplane travel before leaving the refugee camps.) Their only ethnic kin in the United States are those of their community who arrived in the past five years. Except for a few American anthropologists and war veterans who act as translators, they must rely on others in their group who are slightly more acculturated to translate and interpret for them.

Table 1

OCCUPATIONS IN HOMELAND[5]

	In USSR	In Laos	In Cambodia	In Vietnam
Professional	26%	21%	11%	30%
Engineer-technician	27%			
Manager	14%	40%	33%	15%
Clerical and sales		12%	14%	23%
Sub-total white collar	67%	73%	58%	68%
Craft	16%	15%	28%	14%
Transportation	3%	4%	2%	3%
Other blue collar	15%	8%	11%	15%

Table 2

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES[6]

	Laos	Cambodia	Vietnam
None	9.8%	15.4%	20.1%
Primary (grades 1-5)	29.4%	16.5%	5.0%
Jr. H.S. (grades 6-9)	33.9%	15.9%	10.8%
Sub-total	73.1%	47.8%	35.9%
H.S.	19.6%	29.5%	46.9%
University	2.6%	8.3%	15.5%
Other	4.4%	14.2%	1.5%

As can be seen from the above tables, there is a great variety in refugee backgrounds. The percentage of refugees reporting white-collar occupations is high for all groups, but educational levels do not match job titles. (Educational attainment figures for Soviet Jews are not available, but generally the educational requirements for jobs in the U.S.S.R. are closer to our own standards than is the case for the Indochinese refugees.) To highlight just one pair of statistics, 73% of the Laotian refugees report an educational level of junior high school or less, and 73% of that same cohort report having held white-collar jobs at home. Once a "new" refugee arrives in a developed society he will find that his former occupational title and current skills do not match. However, although job titles may not indicate skills, they are often a good indicator of expectations.

> Worse yet...are cases of Hmong who held high status in their own society but were placed in jobs that were menial compared with those held by their social inferiors in the clan. They have suffered from depression, loss of identity, and a sense of isolation.[7]

The Refugee Experience

The heart of the refugee experience is trauma and loss. While our concern is the refugee experience during resettlement, we must be mindful of what has occurred before arrival in the United States.

Refugees leave their homelands because they are pushed out by fear of persecution, by actual persecution, or are expelled by their government. Given a choice, virtually all refugees would have stayed put. Superficially some refugees resemble voluntary immigrants, but there are great differences. The immigrant can prepare for his journey, learn some of the language, explore the job market, bring resources with him, and go home if the adventure does not go well. Immigrants leave home in search of opportunity; they may have some skills but they were rarely prominent or successful at home. The Refugees, however, are pushed out of their homeland by political factors. They have not failed within their homeland. They were successful, prominent, well-integrated, educated, independent, functional, self-sufficient individuals. (Expellees may be an exception to this generalization. The characteristics of an expellee cohort will be determined by the expelling authority. The United States has received two large expellee groups in the last year--ethnic Chinese from Vietnam and Cubans.) Refugees are not poor people, but are temporarily without funds or opportunity.

After being uprooted, pushed out of their homes, refugees experience considerable further trauma during the stage of flight and during the long wait in the refugee camp. From this suffering comes the likelihood of certain changes in the refugee's behavior that will persist throughout the resettlement process.

> ...catastrophic misfortune acted to sharpen their aggression and to increase their resourcefulness.[8]
>
> During the resettlement phase a number of developments occur long after the refugee has reestablished himself....The two major outcomes of the refugee experience then are the sense of invulnerability and the sense of guilt that emerge after safety has been reached. Both can be seen as intervening variables: the former leading to risk-taking and the latter to aggressive behavior.[9]

In examining the refugee experience during resettlement it is important to take a split-screen view of what is happening. On one side is what research indicates happens to most refugees, what they should actually expect regarding life in a new and strange land. On the other side we have the refugees' expectations, often romantic and unrealistic, which are quite different from what we know they should expect. The refugees' expectations will have a large impact on their behavior during resettlement.

The Pattern of Adjustment

The general pattern of refugee adjustment over time can be analyzed in four stages: (1) the initial arrival period of the first few months; (2) the first and second years; (3) after four to five years; (4) a decade or more later. This discussion is limited to just a few key points. Across the spectrum of occupational and economic adjustment, social adjustment, cultural adjustment, and mental health, the pattern develops as follows.

In the initial period the refugees will be confronted by the reality of what has been lost. From a high occupational and social status at home they will plunge downward in their new land--from professional to menial, from elite to an impoverished minority.

> At first, they are willing to accept any work in order to resettle. Soon, however, sighns of dissatisfaction, caused by not using their skills and loss of status, begin to appear among them.[10]

> The higher the SES (socioeconomic status in Cuba), the more the dissatisfaction with present work that is expressed. Dissatisfaction appears greatest among those who have lost the most status ... as SES increases, proportionately more ... are optimistic.[11]

And they will confront the loss of their culture--their identity, their habits. Every action that used to be habitual or routine will require careful examination and consideration. Strains will appear at home because the husband can't provide, the women must work, the children don't respect the old ways. (Because they acquire the new culture more rapidly, the children socialize the parents.) Nostalgia, depression, anxiety, guilt, anger, frustration are so severe that many refugees toy with the idea of going home even though they fear the consequences.

During the next period of one or two years the refugees display an impressive drive to recover what has been lost, to rebuild their lives.

Some of the factors which caused the refugees' initial downward mobility can be ameliorated by time, acculturation, language improvement, retraining programs, and hard work and determination. There are two key factors present here. First, the refugees were successful and prominent at home, and those qualities that led to their earlier success can facilitate upward mobility in their new land. Second, the refugee experience may make them more aggressive and innovative. They will work hard and try many new approaches to rebuild their lives.

In this period many of the refugees will change jobs, go to school, and move from their initial placement to an area of refugee concentration. They will also experience increased problems within the family, and the level of mental dysfunction is likely to shift and increase.

After four or five years the refugee has completed the major part of his adjustment. Less change occurs after this point. The refugee has acquired the language and the culture, been retrained, worked hard. If the goal is not near or at hand now, the refugee is likely to abandon the efforts. Skills are getting stale, the refugee is older, the family and the routines of living demand attention. Drive and determination wane, discouragement sets in, and the refugee is resigned to the changes in his life and statuses. By this point many refugees talk of their exodus as having been for the sake of the children; hopes are transferred to the next generation.

Resignation, of course, does not necessarily mean happiness. Many will be embittered and alienated. Many will be just surviving, acculturated enough to function but far from assimilation or integration.

After ten years the refugee group will have achieved a certain stability. The recovery of lost status will have continued but at a much slower pace.

The sum total after the first decade is one of decline. Despite the drive and determination, the effect of exodus is to produce lower status.

Resettlement Behavior

After all the trauma and suffering, after the languishing in a refugee camp, a refugee approaches his new land with mixed feelings. The refugee left his home to get away from danger, he had no destination in mind, no "positive original motivations to settle elsewhere."[12] The country of resettlement is often chosen against or despite his wishes, the refugee is taking a "plunge" into the unknown.

> On his way to the country offering him asylum, the refugee experienced ... his liberation from the troubles and cares which has driven him from his fatherland; the oppression of the uncertain arrival which he was to face; the sorrow on account of all that was dear to him and left behind. Against the background of his ... experiences ... he fostered undifferentiated and rosy-coloured expectations about things awaiting him in the country lying ahead.[13]

> ... all age groups had high aspirations for a better life in America ... expectation of a much better life five years from the time of the interview ... in contrast with what they had experienced over the past five years .... it was precisely because of such high expectations that many became disillusioned by the harsh realities.[14]

Refugees have high expectations about their new life, especially regarding their economic and occupational adjustment. They do not expect to lose anything because of their migration. The refugees want to recover their lost status and are resistant to accepting jobs that represent underemployment.

> ... that rejection and dispossession created in them a burning desire to make a place for themselves and to prove their worth.[15]

> Soviet Jews arriving in this country are a strongly motivated, determined and work-conscious population with high, demanding (if not unrealistic at times) expectations for the labor market and their appropriate place in it. ... a ... work force which ... expects to find ... employment commensurate with their education and job experience. That these expectations cannot always be fulfilled is due to a number of problems.[16]

A phenomenon of particular importance regarding refugee behavior during resettlement is the refugees' strong belief that they are owed something by someone. Since their persecutors are unavailable, the refugees shift their demands to the government and the helping agencies.

> Refugees often have difficulties with agencies set up to help them. ... Many agencies report that the refugees studied tended to be very demanding, displaying an attitude that they should be compensated for their unjust suffering and fortitude. They continually complained of not receiving enough.[17]

> ... there is uniformity of opinion among the interviewees of all groups in blaming the government for their sorry state of affairs ...
> measures for rehabilitation of the refugees could not meet all of their felt needs. This gave rise to a mounting dissatisfaction against the government.[18]

Neither the government or the agencies are able to satisfy all of the refugees' demands. As their requests are frustrated the refugees become suspicious and bitter. Denied what they believe is owed them, feeling that the agencies seek to control them, the refugees suspect "counterfeit-nurturance," that is, aid given to humiliate and subjugate the refugees rather than from motives of genuine charity. A vicious spiral can set in: refugees are helped because they are helpless; they must display their need and helplessness; the caseworker cannot accede to all who are needy, must shield himself from emotional involvement; the cool attitude of the caseworker conveys suspicion to the refugee about his truthfulness; if they won't believe the truth the refugee inflates it; hearing exaggerated stories the caseworker becomes suspicious.

> ... subsistence from government is resented as "counterfeit nurturance" and a mistrust of government officials develops.[19]

> The immigrant tends to see the resettlement agency as a hostile bureaucracy. This may cause the immigrant to become aggressive, demanding of resources and to measure his initial success in the United States by how much he can get from the agency.[20]

A last point regarding refugee resettlement behavior: the refugee is searching his way through a strange and frightening society. The patterns of behavior that sustained life at home are no longer sufficient. The refugee is uncertain about how to mobilize his resources to succeed in his new home.

> Loss of patterns of conduct is intensified by the uncertainty of what kind of behavior is acceptable or nonacceptable in their new environment... may exhibit restlessness, aimless bustling about, constantly searching for something to do.[21]

Without clear guidance from the host the refugee does not know what to do. This need for guidance is greatest in the initial stages of resettlement.

> ... is experiencing crisis and is often placed in ambiguous situations without clear definitions of behavioral expectations... ... tries to redefine his life situation and to adopt strategies for dealing with the crisis, he begins to discover that their prior life experiences have not adequately prepared him for life in this different culture.[22]

The split-screen view of resettlement reveals a tension in resettlement that must be dealt with if refugees are to integrate successfully into our society. The resettlement agencies and the refugees have different views of the same situation. In pursuing their rose-colored expectations of their ability to recover what they have lost, refugees can become aggressive, demanding, and suspicious. Behind these behaviors, though, is confusion, uncertainty, and a need for guidance. If the resettlement system does not provide clear expectations and unambiguous situations, then we will have refugees who must seek their own way and who are likely to be demanding and suspicious.

III

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROCESS AND AGENCIES

Refugee resettlement in the United States is carried out by Federal government departments, state and local government agencies, and private voluntary agencies, each with a separate sphere of action but none able to accomplish the task alone. Although the work is interdependent, the relationship is not always cooperative. Each has its own preferences, aims, constituencies, needs, and pressures. In addition, neither the different governmental levels nor the voluntary agencies can be thought of as a monolith. The Federal role is divided up among more than a half-dozen departments, each with its own orientation and with no one agency, until recently, paramount. There are eleven voluntary agencies, each with its own methods and policies of resettlement as well as its own internal conflicts. There is too great a variance in the approaches of the fifty states and thousands of localities to characterize each program, but they range from close cooperation and coordination at virtually all levels to completely isolated and fragmented programs.

The government decides who may enter the country and provides money to the voluntary agencies to assist them in their tasks. The government also provides a number of welfare, educational, medical, language, and vocational programs through the voluntary agencies and through state and local governments to assist the refugees. The voluntary agencies work directly with the refugees. Using government funds and substantial donations and resources that they receive from their own support groups, the agencies run refugee camps, provide emergency relief, process applications, place refugees in communities, provide or act as sponsors, remain in contact with the refugees during the initial stages of resettlement, and provide many follow-up services.

State and local governments have increasingly become involved in resettlement. Particularly through local education agencies, often in cooperation with the voluntary agencies, they provide a wide range of language, health, adjustment, educational, and vocational services during the later phases of resettlement.

(A caution is required at this point. No two resettlement programs are identical. The four major resettlement programs currently under way, Indochinese, Cuban, Haitian, and Soviet Jewish, each has its own special mix of departments and agencies, funding, programs, and services. This chapter attempts to be descriptive of all four as well as prior programs, but it is based on the Indochinese program because it is the largest and most complex.)

From Camp to Community: An Overview of the Resettlement Process

Over There

In the earliest phase of resettlement, when the refugees are either in camps overseas or otherwise waiting for permission to enter, the Federal government and the voluntary agencies are both involved, government playing the major policy role but the voluntary agencies doing most of the work. There are two aspects of the prearrival resettlement program. One is procedural--processing for admission, gaining approval, finding a sponsor and community, and then bringing the refugee to the United States. The other is the overseas care and maintenance of the refugees. The governmeny makes policy decisions regarding which groups and how many individuals to admit, and provides funding to the voluntary agencies and international agencies to support some prearrival activities. The voluntary agencies do most of the processing and provide much of the care and maintenance of the refugees.

Processing

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) decides who will be admitted to the United States. The State Department is also heavily involved during this phase, providing funds to the voluntary agencies for some of their activities, negotiating with governments and international agencies, gathering information, especially during emergencies, and playing a key role in deciding the numbers to be admitted and in the general outline of the resettlement program. In both Europe and Southeast Asia voluntary agencies interview the refugees, screen out many ineligibles, and prepare "biodata" files for submission to INS. They may also act as the refugee's advocate with INS. (Note: In Europe this is done by the agencies operating independently; in Southeast Asia Joint Voluntary Agency Representatives (JVAR), one agency in a particular country working on behalf of all agencies, handle the processing.) Once refugees are approved by INS for U.S. entry, the voluntary agencies find sponsors for them, determine their U.S. destination, and bring them here. Actual travel is handled by the Inter-governmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM).

European refugees select which voluntary agency will handle their resettlement; since most are Soviet Jewish refugees HIAS has the largest caseload. The agencies through their own internal mechanisms generate sufficient sponsorships for the refugees. In selecting the refugees' destination, HIAS considers two major factors beyond the availability of a sponsor: reuniting relatives and matching the refugees' skills with the destination's labor market.

Indochinese refugees are divided up among the agencies participating in the program at regular allocation meetings at the American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service (ACVA) in New York. After taking relatives of those they resettled previously, often 80% of all cases, the agencies accept additional cases according to the agencies' capabilities and capacities.

Other aspects of processing are: security clearances through the State Department and other agencies; health screening for excludable or communicable diseases, by ICEM with some U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) oversight; travel, arranged by ICEM and paid for by loans to the refugees (most European refugee travel is paid for by the U.S. government); and reception in the United States by the voluntary agencies and ICEM, which maintain transit centers near some major airports and also greet the refugees at their final destination.

Care and Maintenance

Some refugees have a brief wait for permission to enter the United States while many others linger in refugee camps for years before gaining entry. During their wait the voluntary agencies, sometimes with government funds, provide much of the care and maintenance for the refugees. In large refugee encampments many international agencies and voluntary agencies from many countries may be involved. A recent International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) survey listed 107 voluntary agency programs in Southeast Asia.[23]

European refugees generally have a short wait, recently reduced from two months to one to reduce costs, but occasionally stretching out longer, and currently they are not kept in refugee camps. HIAS, at present the largest agency in Europe, keeps refugees for two weeks in a temporary boarding house in Rome and thereafter gives them a maintenance grant to cover all their needs. Generally soon-to-depart refugees guide the new arrivals to housing and other resources. While awaiting their departure the refugees used to be involved in English classes, vocational orientation, and some medical assistance, but the recent halving of their stay in Rome has curtailed some of these programs.

Asian refugees have much rougher experiences than Europeans. While Soviet Jewish refugees may lose their jobs after applying for a visa and may experience a year of harassment before departure, this pales beside the horrors of predeparture and flight in Indochina. Most Indochinese refugees have endured severe trauma and loss before reaching their first asylum.

Camp conditions in Southeast Asia are generally limited by the asylum state's requirement that they not surpass the conditions of the poorest natives. The dominant role in the camps goes to the host government, working with United Nations agencies and voluntary agencies. Voluntary agencies, both American and foreign, often serve as United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) operational partners and may operate an entire camp or provide specific services. Many ACVA agencies have been working in the Southeast Asian camps since 1975, at first providing relief and medical assistance and recently moving into other areas, such as language training and orientation.

> ... recent immigrants are showing more psychological problems than their predecessors. Given the conditions of escape and camps this is not unpredictable. Programs must be provided in the camps. Decent camps and decent resettlement programs must exist. Vocational rehabilitation programs should be established in the camps. ESL programs must be provided. A program to orient the refugees to the United States should be initiated. Refugees should be provided with an expectation of what a

> sponsor can and cannot provide; with an expectation of what it is like to be a refugee in the United States. It is perhaps at this entry point, i.e., the camps that the root of the problem exists. Without dealing at the root we will only create generations of problems.[24]

United States Camps

Twice in the last five years sizeable groups have been processed and cared for in U.S. camps before their placement in local communities. In 1975 over 130,000 Indochinese refugees were in camps on Guam and in four continental locations. The camps opened in April and May and the last one closed in December 1975. In 1980 over 115,000 Cuban refugees were processed through four camps,[25] some of which are still open at this time. Three of the camps used in 1975, Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, Fort Chafee in Arkansas, and Fort Indiantown Gap in Pennsylvania, were also used in 1980. (In 1975 Camp Pendleton in California was the fourth camp and in 1980 Fort McCoy in Wisconsin was the fourth camp.) In both cases the camps were operated by the military, in 1975 under the authority of an Interagency Task Force, and in 1980 under the direction of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Processing in U.S. camps by INS and the voluntary agencies is similar to that done overseas. In each camp all of the voluntary agencies set up separate offices to interview the refugees. The refugees are free to select which agency will handle their resettlement. In both programs the swiftness with which the emergency developed meant a time lag between the opening of the camps and the establishment of voluntary agency processing offices. Each agency had to hire staff, recruit sponsors, and generally gear up its operations to handle the refugee influx. As a result of this time lag the initial outflow of refugees to local communities is quite slow but speeds up as programs get into place.

Because of the assumption that the Cuban camps would be open only two to three months in 1980, compared to eight months for some Indochinese camps in 1975, language classes and resettlement orientation have not been available for the Cubans as they were for the Indochinese. In both programs recreation, cultural activities, and multilingual daily camp newspapers have been available.

Importance of the Prearrival Period

Decisions made and activities undertaken before the refugees' arrival here can affect the pace and success of the resettlement program. In the last year there have been several changes in overseas camp operations for Indochinese refugees meant to improve their resettlement prospects. As a result of concern in local communities about overseas health screening procedures, which threatened community receptivity and sponsorship development, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) through the PHS undertook increased supervision of screening. Camps can be extremely dangerous health environments, and failure to treat and prevent diseases there can delay and greatly increase the costs of resettlement, increase the risks of refugee dependency, and erode the efforts of sponsors.

Besides the interest in health measures there have been major efforts to increase the refugees' access to English language classes in the camps and to give the refugees prearrival orientation. Teaching language is not only a way to combat the debilitating apathy and hopelessness often found in refugee camps but also enhances the refugees' initial contacts with their sponsors and speeds the achievement of job-readiness. To date, the orientation programs have mainly concentrated on preparing the refugees for the transit phase, but it is hoped to develop more comprehensive programs about American life and vocational prospects. The orientation is meant to give specific information as well as to affect the refugees' attitudes and expectations regarding their new home. Both the language and orientation programs were initiated by voluntary agencies, with foundation support, and have been followed up by the Coordinator's[26] office and UNHCR. Thus far they reach a minority of the refugees.

Two other parts of the prearrival period have been inadequately studied. They are the selection of the refugees' destination and the preparation of the sponsor to receive the refugees.

Choice of Destination

One of the most widely criticized aspects of the 1975 Indochinese refugee program was the decision to disperse the refugees, or, in the language of the Task Force to cause "minimum impact on areas in the United States currently suffering high rates of unemployment."[27]

> ... a dispersal rather than a concentration of refugees. While this policy was well intentioned, the scattered resettlement has by and large destroyed the opportunity for refugees to establish a viable community life of their own.[28]

The development of placement strategies to enhance successful resettlement, either for overseas refugees or those in camps in the United States, is a neglected area. One result of the scattering of the refugees in 1975 has been the growth of impacted areas today--for example, California and Texas. Isolated refugees, one or two families per community but a sizeable number when totalled, are drawn to the few existing refugee concentrations where they can experience community, use their language, preserve aspects of their culture, and find a little bit of home. Had the refugees been clustered in many communities in 1975, creating a critical mass with holding power, it is possible that less secondary migration would have occurred and there would now be many more medium-sized areas rather than a few giant concentrations. Dispersal can be harmful to those refugees who abandon their isolation, move, and have to start anew, to the sponsors who give generously of their time and resources only to see those they aided depart, and to the area of secondary migration that finds its services overburdened.

Placement strategies to be considered include: matching the destination's labor needs with the refugees' background; in multiethnic refugee movements such as the Indochinese, sending only one ethnic group to a community to reduce the strains caused by serving numerous cultures, languages, and backgrounds; determining housing availability; and deliberately developing new refugee clusters, to draw refugees away from reunion with friends and more distant relatives in heavily impacted areas and to induce, not require, resettlement and stability in new locations.

Sponsor Preparation

There is normally a lag of several weeks to several months between the time a sponsor is selected to receive a refugee family and the refugees' arrival. There is no consistency in the use of this time period. Some sponsors are briefed, put into contact with refugee service staff and experienced sponsors, and provided with written materials or training about the refugee group, cross-cultural communication, the sponsorship process, and services available locally, regionally, and nationally. Other sponsors only receive their refugees. They learn by trial and error on the job. Needless to say, they will make many common and avoidable mistakes.

Domestic Resettlement

Successful refugee resettlement in the sense of achieving self-sufficiency and the ability to participate equally in our society is a lengthy process generally requiring at least three to five years of hard work by the refugees and the agencies involved in resettlement. A good deal of change and adjustment will take place after five years, but the major alterations in the refugees' circumstances take place in this initial period. If substantial progress toward self-sufficiency and equal participation is not completed within five years, the refugee will be more likely to make an inadequate long-term adjustment to our society.

The five-year domestic resettlement period is best viewed in three stages: (1) initial reception--the first six months, but within a range of three to nine months; (2) adaptation, acculturation, and initial integration, which is achieved after approximately two years, but within a range of eighteen months to three years; and (3) the drive toward self-sufficiency, which ends three to five years after arrival.

As the refugee goes from the first to the last stage, the involvement of various resettlement agencies and authorities will change: some will drop out, some new ones will become active, and some will be present throughout but their significance will rise or fall. Generally, the time periods of the stages will tend to stretch out for preliterate "new" refugees and compress for traditional refugees with transferable skills.

Agencies Assisting Refugees

Before describing the resettlement process in greater detail, it is useful to note the agencies involved in refugee resettlement. In going through the resettlement process the refugee will have a multitude of contacts with various government and private agencies. Some contacts will be fleeting, once only; others will be for the duration of the resettlement effort. The major agencies engaged in resettlement can be classified in four groups: Federal government, voluntary agencies, state governments, and local education agencies and other local service providers.

For all agencies involved in refugee resettlement the late 1970's have been a time of rapid growth and change. The early '70's saw relatively few refugee admissions other than the continuing Cuban program, at a declining level, and a few others such as the Ugandan Asians. The geographic focus of the Cubans meant that few states and localities were impacted and so no national problem existed. The voluntary agencies were similarly less active in the early '70's, often operating with, by today's standards, skeletal staffs and more concerned with details of policy than resettlement programs. The Federal view, as was amply documented in the 1979 hearings, was that refugee resettlement was a unique nonrecurring problem requiring no standing institutional mechanism.

Federal Government

The Federal government does not resettle any refugees, but it provides the policy framework and many of the funds, programs, and resources needed for resettlement. Both the legislative and executive branches are involved, but the executive plays the major role. Congress has, however, through authorization and appropriations, plus the passage of the Refugee Act of 1980, had an impact on almost all aspects of resettlement.

The Federal government's role has been in a constant state of flux since the inception of the Indochinese program in 1975. In the last five years, authority for the program has been vested in the Interagency Task

Force for Indochina Refugees (1975), HEW Refugee Task Force (1976-1978), HEW Indochinese Refugee Assistance Program [IRAP] (1978-1979), HHS Office of Refugee Resettlement [ORR] (1979-1980), and the Office of the U.S. Coordinatior. The last two offices are specified in the Refugee Act of 1980. These changes represent rapid progress in moving away from a situation where "our response to refugee emergencies has been haphazard, incoherent and often inadequate" to a "more rational, stable and equitable Federal policy ... for assistance to them" It recognizes that "the need for resettlement of refugees is neither unusual nor incidental but is a continuing problem."[30]

The Coordinator's responsibilities regarding domestic resettlement include developing overall U.S. policy on resettlement, coordinating the resettlement effort through chairmanship of the Interagency Committee for Refugee Affairs, and "facilitating liaison between the Federal Government, the voluntary resettlement agencies, and state and local governments concerned with the domestic resettlement of refugees."[31]

The Office of Refugee Resettlement in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) provides domestic assistance to refugees after their initial placement in communities. ORR arranges for state, county, or local public agencies or private service agencies to provide resettlement support services to refugees, particularly English language training, orientation, and employment services. These services are completely Federally funded through Title XX of the Social Security Act or state purchase-of-service agreements. Additionally, ORR provides cash and medical assistance to refugees, completely Federally funded, through the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, state cash assistance programs, the Federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program for the aged (65 and over), blind, and disabled, and Medicaid.

ORR assists certain refugees, especially Soviet Jewish refugees, by matching grants to national voluntary resettlement agencies for up to 50% of resettlement costs. In these programs the voluntary agencies rather than the public sector--although some public services are used--provide English as a Second Language (ESL) training, employment services, and cash maintenance and medical assistance.

Other Federal agencies concerned with refugees include the Public Health Service (Office of Refugee Health Affairs and Center for Disease Control), Department of Labor (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act [CETA], Job Corps, and the U.S. Employment Service), Department of Education (Transition Program for Refugee Children, Adult Education Program for Indochinese Refugees, and bilingual education and vocational education programs), and Department of Justice (Immigration and Naturalization Service and Community Relations Service).

Lastly, the Bureau of Refugee Programs in the Department of State has major responsibility for the initial domestic resettlement of refugees. The Bureau provides for the refugees through contracts which make grants of several hundred dollars per refugee to the voluntary agencies. The contracts focus on initial resettlement services: the voluntary agencies are to provide prearrival, reception, orientation, health, employment, counseling and referral services, and other services directed towards the goal of self-sufficiency. Although the contracts permit services for a number of years, they are focused on the first year after arrival.

Voluntary Agencies

Refugee resettlement in the United States, especially the initial stage, is carried out primarily by eleven voluntary agencies that are members of the American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service (ACVA). The agencies have a long tradition of helping migrants: many have been active since World War II, some go back earlier, and one recently celebrated its centenary. The agencies represent the diversity of America. Five are religiously affiliated--Church World Service, Protestant (CWS), Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), United States Catholic Conference (USCC), and World Relief Refugee Service, Protestant Evangelical (WRRS); three are ethnically based--American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees (AFCR), Polish American Immigration and Relief Committee (PAIRC), and Tolstoy Foundation, Russians (TF): and three are community based--American Council for Nationalities Service (ACNS), International Rescue Committee (IRC), and National Council of YMCA's (YMCA). Reflecting their variety, the agencies have developed many diverse resettlement techniques based on their own constituencies, networks, contacts, and strengths.

Refugees are resettled through a system of sponsorship created to insure they do not become public charges and to help refugees become self-sufficient. Sponsors undertake a moral, not legal, commitment to provide for the refugee's initial basic needs, orientation, assistance with employment and language, and other aspects of initial resettlement. Sponsorship is arranged by the voluntary agencies. There are a great variety of sponsorship forms, but they can be separated into five categories: agency, congregational, group, relative, and individual sponsors. Although all agencies have their preferences, most use more than one sponsorshop model.

In agency sponsorship the voluntary agency or one of its branch agencies serves as sponsor, and its professional staff, often including social workers, aids the refugee, using a casework approach.

Member congregations of religious denominations affiliated with voluntary agencies have provided the greatest number of sponsors over the years. Congregations may lack professional expertise, but they compensate through zeal, a large number of participants, a more personal involvement, and a variety of resources that can be mustered. Many congregational sponsors are supplemented by networks of church social service offices staffed by professionals.

A group sponsor may be a civic, fraternal, or ethnic organization, an ad hoc neighborhood group, a factory or business, or any of a number of other associations. Although there has been some success with this model it requires careful monitoring because of its temporary and sometimes opportunistic nature (using refugees as a source of cheap labor), and because voluntary agencies have less control over group sponsors.

Use of relatives as sponsors generally increases as a refugee program continues. The earlier arrivals further along in the adjustment process guide and help their incoming relatives. "At present, more than 75% of the refugees arriving from Southeast Asia, the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and Cuba have family here."[32] Nowhere near 75% of all refugees are sponsored by their relatives, but the figure indicates the potential for use of this model in older ongoing refugee programs.

Normally individual sponsors are avoided by the voluntary agencies because other sponsorship models can muster greater expertise and resources, and experience has shown that even people well-intentioned at the outset often get exhausted by the demands and stresses of resettlement. Despite misgivings, many agencies have used this model during periods of heavy refugee influx.

Beyond initial reception and placement in the community, voluntary agencies work with the refugees to develop plans for their future and provide follow-up services aimed at the goals of integration and self-sufficiency. The voluntary agencies provide a full range of resettlement services, including English as a Second Language, vocational training, and physical and mental health programs. Some are financed through agency resources, others through state purchase-of-service agreements. It must be noted that there is a great variance in voluntary agency programs: some are comprehensive, others fragmentary or nonexistent; some vary according to the agency involved, others within a given agency's branches in a particular state.[33]

The role of the voluntary agencies, and the meaning and expectations of sponsorship, have changed greatly over the course of the Indochinese and Soviet Jewish refugee programs. The agencies' focus in the past was the initial reception period. Dealing with traditional refugees, backstopped by ethnic communities, confronted by smaller numbers, the voluntary agencies sponsored refugees and offered relatively individualized follow-up services when needed. The challenge of resettling increased numbers, many of whom are "new" refugees, has led to growth, innovation, and an altered institutional response by the voluntary agencies. The voluntary agencies and the Federal, state, and local agencies are in virgin territory; before 1975 no developed society had dealt with such a large group of "new" refugees.

The major voluntary agency changes include: an enhanced role for ACVA in coordinating the Joint Voluntary Agency Representatives and the allocation meetings; the establishment and use by individual agencies of networks of regional and social service offices offering follow-up services; and the development of English-language, vocational training, employment, and mental health programs by many voluntary agency affiliates.

State Governments

State governments have become increasingly involved in refugee resettlement since 1975. Before then state governments were occasionally significant (Cuban and other programs) but rarely prominent in resettlement. At present, state government involvement is important and growing in the Indochinese program, relatively minor in the Soviet Jewish refugee program, and not yet clear, but likely to be significant, in the Cuban refugee program. More to the point, the Refugee Act of 1980 and the regulations issued under its authority clearly envisage a central role for state governments in resettlement coordination and service provision.

State government participation in refugee resettlement, especially the Indochinese program, has grown in an ad hoc manner as a result of a number of program and policy decisions made, mostly at the Federal level, since 1975. In 1975 the national government decided to utilize the public assistance system, which is state-administered, to backup the voluntary agencies' resettlement efforts in the event of "sponsorship breakdowns." State governments are fully reimbursed for the cost of public assistance and their administrative expenses in providing assistance to refugees. In addition, many resettlement services have been made available to refugees through state Title XX plans or state purchase-of-service agreements with local public or private agencies. These services are completely Federally funded, but the money passes through state agencies, primarily social service departments, and the states make the key decisions regarding services to be provided and choice of the local agency.

States have not participated equally in these programs, especially Title XX and purchase-of-service. The variance has depended on the nature and flexibility of a state's existing Title XX plan, the state's appreciation of the potential of Title XX funding for refugees, and the willingness and initiative of state officials to adapt their systems to use this device. Despite an August 1979 policy directive to increase flexibility and funding of a wider range of services, some states still participate at a minimum level. "Welfare benefits, Medicaid coverage and Title XX eligibility requirements vary substantially from state to state and have a major effect on the ability of refugees to obtain needed services."[34]

On the other hand, some states have gone far beyond minimal participation in refugee resettlement. Displaying initiative and compassion, state governments have become refugee resettlement agencies, direct service providers, major information sources, catalysts for action, refugee advocates, and coordinators of comprehensive public-private resettlement programs. Governors' offices have often played a vital role in establishing state refugee programs and in ensuring that state departments and agencies--housing, education, health, and others--are accessible and responsive to refugees' and service providers' needs.

In partial recognition of the leading role played by some states and desiring to spur other states to greater activity and participation, the Refugee Act of 1980 and its regulations require state governments, in order to receive Federal refugee resettlement program funds to do the following: submit a plan describing how the state intends to encourage effective refugee resettlement and promote economic self-sufficiency through cash and medical assistance and other support services; designate a single state agency to develop and administer the plan; designate a coordinator to develop needed services and ensure coordination of public and private resettlement resources; and establish an advisory council of refugees, local government representatives, voluntary agencies, and service providers to be consulted regarding state plan development and review.

Not unlike that of the voluntary agencies, the role of state governments in refugee resettlement is uneven, variable, and spotty. Many states have minimal programs or none at all, while others offer comprehensive and coordinated resettlement services. The trend, bolstered by legislation, is clearly towards fuller participation by state governments in refugee resettlement.

Local Education Agencies

Local education agencies (LEA) and other local public service providers have experienced growth similar to that of state governments. Just as the Federal government does not resettle refugees, state governments have little direct contact; the Federal funds after passing through state hands are utilized by local agencies, public and private, which provide direct service to the refugees. In the past, especially with easier-to-resettle refugees (i.e., traditional refugees), local public agencies have provided non-refugee-specific services such as ESL, vocational training, and some social adjustment services. The inability of such mainstream programs to serve the needs of Indochinese refugees, although they have generally worked effectively with other refugee groups, led to the development of Special Projects, Title XX social services, and other social services for Indochinese refugees.

> The first year of money for adult Indochinese refugees went directly to the adult education systems in each state, and it went down the drain. In most parts of the country Indochinese refugees were put in classes with everyone else, in ongoing programs and the money was essentially lost.[35]

The growing importance of LEA's and other local public service providers can be gathered from the 1979 IRAP Report to the Congress. States have entered into 227 service agreements, 84 with public agencies and 141 with private agencies. Fifty-seven percent of HHS/IRAP Special Project funding for 68 English language and employment services projects, and for 32 mental health projects, has gone to private nonprofit agencies, mostly voluntary agency affiliates, and forty-three percent has gone to public agencies, mainly LEA's.[36] It is likely in the future that the proportion and number of public agency projects funded will increase because the Refugee Act of 1980 does not repeat an earlier legislative requirement that most projects be administered by voluntary agencies.

Local education agencies--school districts, community colleges, adult education centers, vocational training institutes--as well as county welfare or social service departments are now providing services to Indochinese refugees. The major services provided are ESL instruction, particularly with a vocational emphasis, and vocational training and other employment services. A variety of program models are followed, often depending on the number of refugees in an area. A relatively small number of refugees will justify investment in special ESL, VESL (Vocational ESL), and prevocational ESL (for direct job placement) for a particular refugee group. Vocational education specifically geared to a refugee group encounters greater difficulties. It is hard to find vocational teachers fluent in the refugees' language, and expensive to prepare bilingual course materials to develop a new curriculum sensitive to the refugees' cultural background. Most vocational programs in areas with an insufficient number of refugees to justify special efforts will require a certain degree of English language ability on the student's part and will use bilingual tutors, who may not have the specific vocational skill being taught, to supplement instruction.

What is significant about the LEA programs is that the refugees are likely to be enrolled for a long period of time, three months to over one year of ESL and six to eighteen months of vocational training. These LEA programs provide specific resettlement services, dealing with part of a refugee's comprehensive resettlement needs. The service personnel, because of their constant and lengthy contact with the refugees, get frequent requests to assist the refugees in the full range of resettlement problems, and often feel they must respond despite a lack of training in areas beyond their specialities. This is especially the case in communities lacking comprehensive resettlement service offices. As a result ESL teachers become social workers, career counselors, job developers, and vocational skills instructors, and assist in sponsor development, family reunification, and transportation. They are asked to intervene in problems and to help make life and career decisions without any expertise, guidance, or information.

The Stages of Domestic Resettlement

As the refugee goes through the first five years of resettlement he will undergo many changes, and his service needs will also change. While traversing the stages--(1) initial reception; (2) adaptation, acculturation, and initial integration; and (3) the drive toward self-sufficiency--the refugee will change from a destitute, bewildered individual unable to use the local language or function in the host culture to one who is, we hope fluent (albeit with an accent), employed, has many possessions and even a home, and is familiar if not comfortable in the new land.

A recent survey by Professor Young Yun Kim of Indochinese in Illinois highlights these changes. The refugees' income level, home, car, telephone ownership, and amount of public financial assistance showed steady improvement over the five years of their residency in the United States.

Similarly, over the five years the use of services changed: "most of the refugees with active sponsorships are recent arrivals." English program utilization was halved from the first year, 78%, to the fifth year, 39%; while the use of counseling programs was greatest among third-year residents; the use of job skills training was highest among third and fifth year residents; and job placement services were most heavily used in the early years, particularly the second and third.[37]

During the resettlement process the refugee is not a static individual. Confused and dependent at first, the refugee has the potential for self-sufficiency and independence. The mix of services, agencies, and expectations appropriate to the first year of resettlement will be inappropriate to the fifth.

Stage 1: Initial Reception

In the past, initial reception services have been the core of the U.S. resettlement programs. Traditional refugees familiar with major aspects of our culture, having transferable skills and ethnic kin, have disappeared from public view and concern after a brief period of assistance. Today, with refugees who represent a greater challenge to our resettlement programs, this stage of resettlement has grown in significance as it has declined as a proportion of the total effort. Just as prearrival services impact on the whole program, the initial resettlement services determine and set the limits for much of what is to follow.

The heart of the initial reception period, and the refugees' first sustained contact with Americans, is the sponsor. (See the discussion of sponsorship on pp. 30-31) Because of the refugees' total lack of familiarity with our language and our ways, the first weeks in America require labor-intensive efforts by the sponsor. Sponsors prepare at least initial housing, furnishings, food, and clothing for the new arrivals. The first days and weeks are occupied with applying for a Social Security card; enrolling children in school; health screening and follow-up; explaining many mechanical facets of American homes and life such as appliances and telephones; familiarizing with public transportation, the local community, and American life; discussing banks, money, and credit; explaining emergency procedures; touring neighborhoods, shopping, schools, and other facilities; beginning job skills review and discussion of the future; and enrolling adults in language classes. Even with regular orientation sessions it will take several weeks before refugees can function on their own. In that time the sponsor is likely to be on constant call to provide transportation, guidance, and advice. Additionally, the refugees' emotional needs, fear of the new life, culture shock, trauma, and concern for loved ones lost, missing, or separated will require care and attention.

The sponsor introduces the refugee to the community, provides orientation, and enables the refugee to use local general public or refugee-specific services. Two crucial areas in most sponsorships are a mutual understanding of the refugee-sponsor relationship and the expectations each has of the other, and the continuation of the relationship once the refugee is able to satisfy his own material needs but still has need for emotional support, follow-up services, and guidance.

Sponsorship is an interim procedure focused on the first year of refugee resettlement. One of the goals of sponsorship is a loosening or breaking of the refugee-sponsor relationship. Clearly the goal of self-sufficiency implies the development of independence by the refugee, a lessened need to rely on the sponsor. Many have compred this to the later phases of adolescence--wanting to be on one's own but inexperienced and hiding a bit of fright. And of course many parents do not know when to let go. To this view must be added the fact that the refugee has been independent, self-sufficient, on his own once before at home. All through the period of dependency on the sponsor the refugee will feel a certain unease; the dependency is not only temporary but also artificial.

Although throughout the U.S. resettlement system there is a strong emphasis on employment, the Refugee Act of 1980 recognizes that a refugee needs some initial period of adjustment. As a result, the tying of cash assistance to the refugee's registration with employment services and acceptance of appropriate job offers does not apply during the first sixty days after entry.

Of particular importance with regard to self-sufficiency in this stage are the signing up of the refugee for Medicaid and often public assistance and the beginning of ESL or VESL courses. (Note: in the Soviet Jewish program medical and cash assistance are provided by the voluntary agency, which has received a matching grant from HHS to cover almost all initial reception and resettlement costs. Many of these refugees are also provided ESL and vocational counseling by their sponsor.) This brings the refugee into contact with LEA's and other local service providers--both voluntary agencies and public. As the refugee learns to get around and settles into a more scheduled and routine life, his regular contact with his sponsor will decrease while contact with more impersonal agencies increases.

The shared goal of virtually all service providers is to get the refugee employed within the first six months after arrival. While many refugees will become employed during this period, a great many will take another track toward self-sufficiency. The single source of greatest complaint found during this research, and in many other studies, is the ability of the refugee to reject employment and to stay or go onto public assistance while in ESL or training programs. The frustration engendered by this situation often leads different service providers to point fingers at one another.

> One basic weakness in the resettlement has derived from the heavy reliance of the federal government upon the voluntary agencies, without adequately consulting the states. In effect the private agencies have had major controls over policies directly impacting the states.[38]
>
> We continue to receive reports of welfare eligibility officials "selling" refugees on public assistance or fearing to deny such assistance to them and of refugees leaving jobs in one state to go to school on public assistance in another.[39]
>
> There appear to be opinions about our work which we feel are McCarthy-era type myths about the welfare system.[40]
>
> There is no incentive for local public assistance offices to review their caseloads or work with voluntary agencies...On the contrary, some observers suggest that local public assistance offices find advantage in maintaining a sizeable Indochinese caseload...[41]
>
> Lack of coordination between the state and local governments and the voluntary agencies has also created specific problems for states in implementing the refugee resettlement program.[42]

At the end of the initial reception period the refugee is in far less intensive contact with his sponsor and now relies most heavily on voluntary agency and public social service programs, particularly language and employment programs. Many refugees have now mastered survival English and are continuing in class to upgrade their English ability and starting vocational training programs to acquire new skills. Most refugees, on the other hand, are now employed, in entry-level (low-pay) jobs and are trying to upgrade their English through after-work classes and tutoring. Many employed refugees will be planning to enter training programs at a later date and will quit work to do so.

The key to successful refugee resettlement is the acquisition of language.

> The most essential point in refugee resettlement in the United States is that of learning the English language enough to function and cope in an American society.[43]
>
> It's also a fact that in order to improve yourself vocationally, your language must improve.[44]

Learning English takes time. The amount of time will vary accordint to the background of the learner; generally, educated refugees learn much faster than preliterate refugees. For most refugees the initial reception period is only the start of their language learning. In this period refugees learn survival English, enough to be job-ready. Learning enough English to function in mainstream vocational training programs generally occurs in the next stage.

Stage 2: Adaptation, Acculturation, and Initial Integration

The refugee makes great strides toward self-sufficiency during this stage. Recall that, depending on the refugee's characteristics, motivation, and attitude, he may enter this stage after three to nine months in this country and complete it in eighteen months to three years after arrival. In this stage the refugee builds on the foundation provided during initial reception. Survival English will improve to basic functional English sufficient for work, school, shopping, and a host of other situations. Further, the language improvement will facilitate training or job advancement and aid occupational or economic improvement. The refugee will have less of a language barrier between him and the natives and their activities and culture.

A refugee's adjustment to a new society is not based solely on material and economic progress. Many emotional problems emerge during the initial integration phase. The pace of the initial reception stage is so rapid and the refugee is making so many adjustments daily that there is little time to dwell on one's losses, homesickness, sorrow, guilt, culture shock, isolation, and other problems. As life settles down the problem of post-traumatic stress disorder frequently emerges, and is exacerbated by resettlement problems. The refugee is learning new roles and must come to grips with drastically changed statuses. Identity confusion, language difficulties, poverty, guilt, isolation, and other stress can lead to mental health problems.

There is broad agreement on the factors promoting or hindering refugee adjustment and thus contributing to mental health problems. Several clusters of factors either beneficial to adjustment or tending toward an increase in mental health problems have been identified. These clusters are: loneliness or isolation; status changes, particularly in occupational-vocational status; intergenerational conflict; host-refugee relationships; and culture shock.

A great challenge with many refugee groups comes in providing them with mental health services. Beyond language difficulties, our mental health concepts and the refugees' beliefs and practices regarding mental health do not match. Further, for many refugee groups mental health problems at home were not dealt with by professional practitioners but by the family or other traditional cultural institutions. In the new land the refugee family and community are often too weak, are unavailable, or have too many problems of their own to aid other refugees.

In the Indochinese program an attempt has been made to help the refugees through HHS special project awards for mental health services. Most projects deliver services separately from the existing community mental health system. Most use Indochinese paraprofessionals or professionals as a way of bridging the cultural and language gap. Despite growing success in serving the refugee population, most of these programs are currently being terminated.

A desire for community plays a major role in refugee secondary migration during this period. The refugee in making this move is displaying at least partial success in acculturating to American society. No longer completely dependent on a sponsor, the refugee has the ability and resources to change location.

During this initial integration stage the refugee will be gradually adjusting to American society, learning new roles and norms, and gaining an ability to handle the many new situations that will occur. Often the adjustment is reluctant and hesitant, a resignation to the changes in life that must be accepted.

What is impressive about most refugees during this period is their drive to recover what has been lost, to rebuild their lives. Refugees experience sharp downward mobility in occupation and status at first. They are handicapped in their first entry into our labor market and virtually all must take entry-level jobs. Language, acculturation, hard work, determination, and training or retraining programs play a major role in restoring some of the refugees' losses.

As noted before, there are several tracks a refugee can take to self-sufficiency. In the reception stage the question is jobs first or ESL and vocational orientation first. In the integration stage the debate is similar; are acculturation and mastery of English accelerated by employment, or should a refugee stay in ESL classes and then proceed on to vocational training? The first option, employment, generally assumes two things--the availability of after-work language programs and the possibility of vocational training, while on public assistance, after one has gained job experience and developed language skill. Many of those choosing the second option, school, training, and welfare, either don't comprehend the first option (it requires a certain American-style faith in upward mobility), or greatly fear they will be abandoned in entry-level jobs that will thus become dead-end jobs. They believe the training route offers the best chance of long-term self-sufficiency.

Many of the refugees most poorly prepared for our society believe most strongly in education and training while on public assistance.

> The Hmong leaders are concerned about their people being locked into menial jobs in perpetuity and are urging their followers to take the welfare-first route and apply for training.[45]

For preliterate refugees, relatively uneducated refugees, and others with difficulty in learning English, the time needed to learn enough English to be ready for vocational training can be quite extended.

> In some programs, qualified students can make the transition in several months from heavy emphasis on ESL to increasing amounts of time spent in vocational instruction; other programs require as much as a year or two of ESL ... before the vocational training is begun.[46]

> Since most vocational programs require English language fluency before clients begin training, many refugees are not prepared to enter such programs, designed to foster self-sufficiency, before the third year.[47]

During the initial integration stage most refugees have little contact with their sponsors although they often will be in contact with their sponsoring voluntary agency through service centers, mental health, English, and skills and employment programs. Increasingly they will also be in contact with other service providers, especially local education agencies. Counseling, job skills training, and job placement services are the most important services in this period.

Stage 3: Toward Self-Sufficiency

While many refugees can achieve self-sufficiency in a relatively short time after arrival, eighteen to twenty-four months, many refugees, particularly "new" refugees and others with handicaps and obstacles to full participation in our labor market, will require three to five years before achieving this goal. Some may never achieve self-sufficiency. If they are denied opportunities and services to learn about our society and culture, and to acquire language and vocational skills, some refugees may languish at the margins of our society. Even with extensive supportive services, many refugees will require a long period of adjustment to their new life.

> Adult refugees with both limited English proficiency and limited education may find that the amount of time it takes to acquire the English and educational skills for entry into vocational training very frustrating, especially if they must start with beginning ESL, acquire literacy training, and obtain a basic education. Realistically, the process can take two or more years of study.[48]
>
> We conducted a statewide survey to measure the qualitative differences between the "early" refugee arrivals ... and the more recent immigrants in the achievement of self-sufficiency. The single most important finding of this study was that refugees do not attain self-sufficiency within twenty-four months ... full assimilation for the later groups will require a major investment of services and cash support.[49]
>
> Our experience demonstrates that a large number of refugees make a critical move toward self-sufficiency within the third year. Since most vocational programs require English language fluency before clients begin training, many refugees are not prepared to enter such programs designed to foster self-sufficiency, before the third year.[50]

A refugee cannot sustain his drive and determination to rebuild his life indefinitely. After four or five years refugees have completed the major part of their adjustment. The dream of restoring one's old status, or acquiring new skills, conflicts with reality. The refugee has studied and worked, often simultaneously mixing a full-time job with evening classes, and if the goal is not near discouragement can set in and the effort will be abandoned. The refugee is older, the family and the routines of living demand attention, drive and determination wane, and the refugee lowers his standards, accepts less, and is resigned to failure or, at most, partial success.

As noted earlier, (pp.14-16) most refugees set unrealistically high goals for themsleves, and most refugee groups experience some decline in status as the net effect of exodus. The degree of decline, however, cannot be predicted at the outset. The programs and services offered will have a major impact on how many hopes are shattered, goals abandoned, standards lowered. While the refugee still has drive and determination it is essential to support and aid his efforts, to maximize his achievements.

During the drive to self-sufficiency the focus is on follow-up services, offered by voluntary agencies and local public agencies, to assist with job upgrading, further training, and vocational counseling. It is unlikely at this stage that the refugee will be in close contact with his original sponsor; the refugee's needs are likely to be beyond their ability to serve. Many refugees who formed friendships during the sponsorship period will still be in contact with the sponsor on that level. The follow-up services must now see to it that if the refugee has been trained, he will be placed in an appropriate position; and if he is working most of the time, then job counseling to explore better positions is needed.

After four or five years in the new land the refugees' service needs have undergone major changes. Most refugees feel that they can cope with Americans and our society but still require English programs and vocational programs.[51]

An especially important activity at this time is to reach out to those refugees who are having difficulties. During the early period of new refugee programs, during periods of program expansions or heavy refugee influx, it is not uncommon for some refugees to be overlooked by programs and services. There are many refugees who are isolated from American life, having minimal language ability, stuck in dead-end situations. Many older refugees and women refugees, who have responsibility for the home and thus have few encounters with the larger society, will fall into this category. Often such cases will be unknown to the service providers but well known within the refugee community. After a period of years in the new land, the refugee community itself becomes an important rescurve of aid to the refugees. Few programs, unfortunately, use this resource to reach out and assist those who have fallen by the wayside.

An important service area in the later years is one that has little to do with self-sufficiency. Even if the refugee is making economic progress, growing prosperity will not insulate the refugee from other worries. As the economic drive either succeeds or is abandoned, other values come forward. Many refugees, even after five years, will be beset by worries about those left behind. Dr. Young Yun Kim's survey of Indochinese refugees in Illinois indicated that 81% of the refugees had very serious concerns about being separated from missing family members, 67% had painful memories of the war and their departure from home, 59% reported homesickness, and 58% were very worried about difficulties in communicating with those in the home country.[52]

Refugees, not unlike many ethnic-Americans in our pluralistic society, are very concerned about their culture, language, ethnicity, and community.

Secondary migration figures are just one illustration of this concern, as is the growth of mutual assistance associations. Cultural centers and self-help groups not only have the ability to serve the refugees' emotional needs, but they can also play a role in the delivery of resettlement services.

> ... increasing evidence of the support and guidance new immigrants are receiving from their resettled relatives and friends. This support network manifests itself in numerous ways: helping newcomers make the initial adjustment to their new homes and neighborhoods, familiarizing them with community services, locating and furnishing apartments, providing leads for potential jobs, informing employers about new arrivals with special skills and expertise, arranging for job interviews, providing interpreter and translator services, sending money, accompanying newcomers to medical appointments and job interviews, guiding families regarding schools for their children--the list is endless.[53]

The end of the drive toward self-sufficiency is the end of the resettlement process. Resettlement takes a long time, and many problems and needs will arise in the future. These three stages of domestic resettlement are the period of the greatest change and activity on the part of both the refugees and the resettlement agencies. If they have been determined, effective, and successful, then the refugee will be self-sufficient in the sense of having the potential for equal participation in his new society.

Resettlement in the United States

> Refugee resettlement is social engineering. It involves the provision of specific services, a general counseling and "helping" component, and assistance to the refugee in formulating, testing and eventually adopting new attitudes and social behavior. Resettlement takes place at the local level in the community, and in large measure, results from interaction between the refugee and the community.[54]

Refugee resettlement is complex social engineering. It involves refugees with their particular needs and behaviors and a plethora of diverse and separate resettlement organizations. Thus far we have examined the refugees and agencies separately and for the most part uncritically. In the next chapter we focus on some of the major issues in refugee resettlement, some of which have already been introduced, and try to evaluate the system critically when all of its parts are brought together and interacting. In the last chapter we shall offer some recommendations regarding future resettlement programs.

IV

ANALYSIS OF ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

This chapter presents an analysis of some of the major issues and problems in refugee resettlement programs. The analysis tries to bring together three elements--the refugees, the resettlement agencies, and the process--to see how things really work or don't work. The main features of the program that are examined are: (1) the support services given to refugees--how they should be organized and delivered; (2) assistance, cash and medical, to refugees--some problems and some suggestions; and (3) coordination of the program and the need for consensus. Some recommendations are made in this chapter, others are hinted at. The final chapter will offer a set of recommendations and a conclusion.

Front-end Loading, ESL, and Vocational Training

I strongly support the idea of front-end loading as a means of reducing dependency and speeding the adjustment of refugees. The premise behind front-end loading is that providing greater services and training to refugees at the start of resettlement, and therefore spending more money, will produce more effective resettlement and less dependency, and will reduce the total expenditures spent on resettlement. In sum, more services and expense in the short term, less dependency and lower costs in the long run.

The idea of front-end loading received support recently from the House Judiciary Committee and HHS/ORR.

> These services will be "front-ended" so that refugees can be placed on the road to self-sufficiency as soon as possible after arrival here.
> The Committee believes that a concerted effort to provide refugees with language training and employment-related services

> as quickly as possible after their arrival will enhance their economic and social self-sufficiency and reduce refugee dependence on public assistance.[55]
>
> We believe that a concerted effort must be made to provide vital services to refugees as soon as possible after their arrival and to begin immediately to enhance their economic and social self-sufficiency.
> Establishing the provision of English language training and employment services as a priority.[56]

What is front-end loading and what can be accomplished through this technique? Although there has been some front-end loading in scattered programs in the United States, this is essentially an idea borrowed from other countries, especially Canada, France, Australia, and Israel. The evidence is either absent or unclear regarding this method's effectiveness, but it is generally favorable. It must be noted, however, that front-end loading generally has been designed for and is most effective in resettling traditional refugees, those with easily transferable professional, technical, or craft skills. Some research on refugee behavior suggests it will also work with "new" refugees. In 1975 intensive programs proved highly effective in resettling Indochinese physicians and dentists. A more limited view of front-end loading is needed when dealing with refugees with nontransferable or few skills.

In trying to determine what front-end loading is we are given little guidance by other countries. The content of their programs is unclear; they emphasize early services, but which ones at what level of intensity for how long are not specified.

As can be seen by the HHS regulations, the focus in the United States will be on language and employment services. If cost-effectiveness, as well as successful resettlement, is one of the goals of front-end loading, then the program becomes clearer. I would submit that the "front" of front-end loading refers to the initial reception stage of resettlement, the first three to six months, but we must never forget that the "front" is only part of the resettlement process, not the whole program. Cost-effectiveness can justify keeping relatively unskilled refugees on assistance and in training for only three to six months. The emphasis is on teaching English, providing vocational orientation, and general orientation. The goal is to get the refugee job-ready as soon as possible.

The vocational orientation component is essential because many refugees refuse to work,

> Some of the problems that we have run into around placing people on jobs happen to be around the refugee's non-acceptance of jobs. We have noticed a marked difference in attitude over the past 3 years.[57]

Vocational orientation, at its best, tries to introduce the refugee to the often-alien idea of a ladder of success and encourages the formulation of a long-term plan to reach a realistic top. Through the later stages of the refugee's adjustment it is valuable to have a sponsor available to monitor the refugee's progress and to give guidance and encouragement.

It is in the best interests of the host and the refugees that front-end loading be viewed as the start, not the finish, of resettlement. Job-ready means the refugees will be able to get the lowest paying menial jobs. There must be follow-up so these do not become dead-end jobs. The follow-up must include upgrading of language skills, and once language ability has progressed to the level of vocational training-readiness there must be counseling and programs to provide opportunities for upward mobility.

Again the research is undone or scanty, but the clear consensus of the ESL professionals is that most refugees can be job-ready in six weeks to six months, depending on the refugee's background and the intensity of the ESL program. Research on employment shows no significant difference in the employability of refugees who know "no English at all" and those with greater ability. The research also shows, however, that those with poor English are unlikely to enter the labor market, and, although employable, they don't do as well as those with better English skills.[58]

This leads us to another argument in favor of giving strong vocational orientation to "new" refugees. Many refugees have come to believe that the best way to learn English is to take "up permanent abode in ESL classes."[59]

> _____, who has many friends among the Hmong, knows of Hmong who have spent several hours a day in ESL classrooms for three years and still cannot carry on a simple conversation in English. They are frustrated and embittered.[60]

Many Americans believe that a mastery of English, as well as acculturation, pride, and other valuable intangibles, is enhanced by early employment.

> U.S. agencies have also learned that a good knowledge of English is most quickly acquired when on the job practice is added to classroom instruction and when there is wide opportunity for everyday language use and encounters within the American community.[61]

> Because second language acquisition and socio-cultural adjustment are interdependent, the emphasis upon acquisition technique _in the classroom_ is inadequate by itself. The classroom is inherently artificial - this is doubly so for someone without a formal education.
> The key to successful English language _acquisition_ is an effective social and support service system. This system is what has come to be known as the sponsorship arrangement.[62]

> From my point of view as a professional in the language teaching field, language learning is made most effective when it is taught as an integral part of the work or home situation.[63]

We must be careful not to oversimplify this issue. More research is required before we approach a definitive answer. There are arguments against the effectiveness of ESL at night.

> I can say that language learning is indeed a very tedious process and that it is difficult for someone who has been working 8 hours a day to effectively learn a language.[64]

Similarily one must recognize that not all refugees belong in the ESL classroom.

> You can't teach language to somebody who is illiterate for 3 to 5 hours a day. He can't stand it. His mind will not take it if he can't relate to some squiggles on a blackboard or a piece of paper.[65]

Whichever route is taken, few refugees will have the language facility for mainstream vocational training in less than one year and many preliterate refugees will require two years to be training-ready. Considering that there are no proven advantages continuing full-time ESL after approximately six months while on public assistance, and there are powerful arguments in favor of full or part-time employment combined with ESL, there seems to be strong reason to prefer the latter route.

The Resettlement Process

The resettlement process that is recommended here is, first, English language programs combined with vocational orientation and general orientation, aimed at making the refugee job-ready as soon as possible, in approximately six weeks to six months. During this period the refugee may be supported by his sponsor or public assistance.

Second is a period of employment. The low-paying jobs that are available to those with little language ability are likely to require some supplemental cash assistance. The important consideration in this period, ranging from six to twenty-four months, is for contact to be maintained with the refugee. Guidance, counseling, and assistance are necessary to ensure progress. The goal in this period is not work for work's sake, it is to get work experience and a work record, to have the acculturation opportunities that exist even with menial jobs, to instill pride and independence, and to improve one's language ability to a level of training-readiness.

> With the acquisition of a job and a self-earned income, the social self of the pater familias underwent a considerable restoration. His experience of having become independent of begging through public assistance committees and of once again being able to support his family himself, restored his self respect and faith in his own abilities. Through having a job the refugee ... went through the process of conforming to the norms of the group, ... so that he began to feel himself socially involved in and accepted by his working group and found in this a foundation for the restitution of his social self.[66]

Third is the vocational training. There are benefits to both the refugee and society in not pushing the refugee into training immediately. The delay, until two or three years after arrival, gives the refugee a chance to acculturate, and to experience and survey our labor market. Preliterate refugees, or even educated refugees who have not yet acculturated, may lack the ability to make wise vocational choices.

> Word travels fast in the refugee community and it was rumored that those were two potential moneymaking areas where jobs were in abundance. The reality of the dirty, heavy nature of auto mechanics and the long technical training in cosmetology discouraged many. Perhaps more important was the reality that limited English speakers were at a terrible disadvantage in those professions.[67]

One must not view vocational training as a panacea. A 1975 General Accounting Office Report to the Congress on Vocational Education stated:

> Although VEA requires that vocational training or retraining be realistic in the light of actual or anticipated opportunities for gainful employment, this factor generally has not been adequately considered in planning for and evaluating vocational education programs. As a result, there is little assurance that changing manpower needs are being addressed in secondary and postsecondary occupational programs supported by Federal funds. Many students are enrolled in traditional courses and are not always able to obtain employment in fields for which they were trained. A number of factors have limited the relevance of vocational programs:
>
> Labor market needs have been neither fully nor realistically assessed.
>
> Work experience often has not been an integral component of the vocational curriculum.
>
> Occupational guidance has not received adequate attention.

> Responsibility for job placement assistance has not been assumed routinely by schools.
>
> Followup of graduates and employers has been marginal.
>
> Barriers have restricted access to training and employment.[68]

Although bilingual or "native language" vocational skills training programs may be cost-effective in heavily impacted areas, most refugees will be placed in mainstream programs, often with some supplemental tutoring or ESL add-on. It must be recalled "that in the process of refugee resettlement, learning English is absolutely essential if the refugee is to function and cope."[69]

> Even if vocational training programs were taught bilingually most employers only speak English so the language and skill levels of refugees must be competitive with others in the job market.[70]

Progress in learning English has tended to be slow for the Indochinese refugees. The following table indicates understanding of English by Indochinese refugees 16 years and older. The refugees surveyed were all in the United States by January 1979, and most of the sample had entered in 1975. The survey was conducted in November and December 1979. At the time of the survey most of the refugees had been here for more than four years.

Understand English	Number	Percentage
Not at all	340	11.2%
Some	1769	58.3%
Well	924	30.4%

Although language proficiency has improved compared to earlier surveys, it is clear that progress is slow.[71]

While in vocational skills training programs, most refugees will need either full or supplemental cash assistance. The benefits in delaying training until later in the refugee's career are that the refugee can make a more realistic choice of a training program, has had an opportunity to experience the real world of work, and has had a period of independence rather than prolonged welfare dependency. For the host it will result in lower costs and a greater number of self-sufficient refugees. We must recognize that under the current unplanned refugee career many refugees spend two or three years in ESL classes and training programs, on full public assistance, and emerge no better off than those who have been employed.

> The starting salaries for persons completing vocational training programs is about the same as starting salaries of those placed on jobs without any specific training.[72]

It is assumed that for the trained individuals there is career mobility, but there is another viewpoint:

> The real question is whether the refugees who first had some English, or even a lot of it, and who first had some training, or even a lot of it, can find jobs that pay more than the jobs you have been able to find for newcomers. I doubt they can, and not only because I am biased in favor of employment as against public assistance but also, and mainly, because a rather obvious question occurs to me. If it is true that in today's American economy, training and some English will enable you to find employment that does not fall into the category of low-pay dead-end jobs, however we define them, how is one to explain the fact that having invested literally billions of dollars in training young Americans, we have not been able to bring down their unemployment rate. It just could be, could it not, that the existence of a stratum of low-pay occupations with limited advancement opportunities is a basic feature of our economy, that motivation and background are more important factors in getting ahead than vocational training, particularly in a deepening recession when well trained Americans who speak English find themselves unable to make a go of it.[73]

This sentiment is expressed another way by Colleen Shearer, Director of the Iowa Refugee Service Center (IRSC).

> The IRSC thinks it is Quixotic to expect miracles from training. It contends that with or without training, most refugee adults cannot expect to progress far beyond base-level jobs.[74]

The Refugees' Viewpoint

There is another viewpoint that must be considered in the welfare-with-training versus the employment-with-training debate. The refugee community after a while "learns the ropes"; and although often its viewpoint is incorrect, based on limited experience with and a misreading of our culture and society, one must admit sometimes they know what is best for their group. And whatever their viewpoint, they are often more persuasive with other refugees than are the sponsors and service agencies.

> The information network among ethnic Chinese relatives in the United States is well developed, he said. It operates through letters, telephone conversations, and visits.[75]
>
> Increasing numbers of refugees arrive with ... a great deal of misinformation picked up during long waits in the camps.[76]
>
> Among a significant portion of the refugee population, particularly the newer arrivals frequently coached by friends and relatives from afar, "going on welfare" is viewed as a part of resettlement, one which permits time to learn English, settle in, and develop marketable skills before going for work.[77]

If there is a fully operational system of job-readiness services and language training plus follow-up, upgrading, training, night-ESL, and counseling, then the refugee community's advice to go on welfare and wait for training is wrong and fraught with disaster. It can lead to welfare dependency, host community hostility, and backlash, can price resettlement out of the market, and put future refugee programs in peril. If, however, "front-end loading" is a slogan rather than a program, if the range of needed services from arrival to as much as five years later is spotty, absent, inadequate, or unreliable, then the refugee community's advice to refuse jobs, stay on welfare, learn and train, while still faulty, may be sound advice from their perspective.

Less than half the refugees received any additional assistance from voluntary agencies/sponsors in other necessary daily living skills.

Most voluntary agencies stop providing assistance when the refugees get a job.

There are not enough English language programs; where classes are available, many of them are haphazard. Good English programs have long waiting lists and huge classes.

Job counseling and vocational/skills training are scarce.

Two-thirds of the refugees had not been to a job counseling/placement agency. This low utilization rate can be attributed to most programs being at capacity.

IRAP funded agencies use bilingual job counselors, but they are sometimes poorly trained and have little knowledge of job market conditions, transferability of skills, licensing or training requirements.[78]

The lack of services described above is recognized by HHS/ORR, and the May 27, 1980 Regulations in the Federal Register give priority to English language training and employment services. Without an increased appropriations, great changes in attitudes by states and localities that have been relatively inactive thus far, and some major revisions in voluntary agency operations and in local coordination of services, it is unlikely that these new policies will have much impact.

Income and Medical Assistance

Income assistance is vital to the survival of refugees during the initial resettlement period. Refugees generally arrive destitute, don't know English, will need time to either transfer their job skills or develop new skills, have physical and psychological problems as a result of their flight and time in camps, and often lack kin or ethnic groups in this country prepared to assist them. They need cash assistance to enable them to make the transition to self-sufficiency.

Medical assistance is less uniformly required by refugees. Some groups arrive in excellent health, others have suffered great trauma in flight and have been debilitated by their long waits in refugee camps. On the whole, their initial medical costs in the United States are likely to be above average. Because of the high cost of medical care here it would be difficult to find volunteers willing to sponsor refugees without the back-up of government medical assistance during the initial period.

Current refugee groups in the United States--Indochinese, Soviet Jewish, Cuban, and Haitian--each receive different levels of cash and medical assistance, and the assistance is provided through two distinct mechanisms.

Indochinese refugees receive cash assistance through the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program or state cash assistance programs. The programs are run by the states, which receive full Federal reimbursement for three years. The normal eligibility requirements for these programs have been waived, a "waiver of categorical relatedness," allowing single refugees and childless couples to receive benefits. Medical assistance, usually linked to cash assistance, is provided by the states, is also fully reimbursable for three years, and is not subject to restrictions.[79]

Cuban and Haitian refugees are aided through the same state mechanisms as the Indochinese; however, there is no "waiver of categorical relatedness," states are reimbursed at the normal Federal-state matching rate, approximately 55%, and the assistance is for only one year.[80]

Soviet Jewish refugees receive cash and medical assistance through their voluntary agency, HIAS, in association with the Council of Jewish Federations (CJF). The program is funded by a matching grant mechanism: 50% of the resettlement costs, including support services in addition to assistance, are provided by the Federal government and the remainder by the voluntary agency. Current costs are approximately $2000 or more per refugee. The level of assistance and eligibility are determined by local Jewish federations operating under CJF guidelines and regular monitoring.[81]

The Cuban program is too new to evaluate, the Soviet Jewish program has produced few if any complaints, and the Indochinese assistance program is widely criticized.[82]

Complaints

Many complaints center around the belief that use of the welfare system is counterproductive and instead of promoting self-sufficiency we are creating welfare dependency. Further, this problem is exacerbated by inadequate resettlement support services, and many are worried about the burden that will fall on state taxpayers when the three years of full Federal reimbursement expire.

> Refugees thus are drawn into the U.S. welfare system which, in spite of periodic changes, continues to be a source of criticism by virtually all knowledgeable practitioners, policy makers and recipients, ... The welfare system promotes dependency for its American recipients and to depend on that "system" to help the refugees become contributing members of society seems a burden to them, at least, and unwise public policy at worst.[83]
>
> Remember that these people are survivors. Don't destroy their ingrained survival instincts by making them dependent upon the system.[84]

Beyond the generalized fear of using the welfare system there are several specific complaints about the operation of the public welfare system:

Medicaid: Refugees have a great need for some form of health insurance, but private insurance plans are generally out of their reach. Most entry-level jobs do not provide medical insurance, or if they do the coverage is inadequate. Additionally, sponsors are reluctant to assist refugees without some medical insurance back-up. In many states refugees are drawn into the cash assistance programs while they are in the process of applying for medical assistance. In many areas the two programs are directly linked. In others, the medical assistance application "is made at the public assistance office where the intake worker is obligated to share with the client information of the rull range of benefits."[85]

> It was strongly suggested that many refugees are on cash assistance in order to be eligible for Medicaid.[86]
>
> A major reluctance among refugees to discontinue cash assistance is the loss of accompanying medical benefits.[87]

Job Refusal, ESL, Training: Despite the belief of the sponsor, the voluntary agency, and vocational training services that a refugee is job-ready, a refugee has the option of refusing employment and staying in ESL or vocational training classes while on public assistance. There are a few rules against this practice but they are lax and unclear, and enforcement is uneven.

> Apparent prerogative of refugees to refuse employment in favor of long-term vocational training.[88]
>
> Now federal regulations are that sixteen hours per week of ESL qualifies as approved training. The training qualifies the refugee for full P.A.[89]
>
> A refugee may continue to qualify for assistance by enrolling sequentially for various training courses.[90]

State Review of Caseload: The above problem is worsened by the fact that with full Federal reimbursement states have little reason to enforce eligibility regulations.

There may be a tendency, we believe, for States to be less

> conscientious in monitoring program expenditures and effectiveness.[91]
>
> In many areas the current tendency is to make maximum benefits available to all applicants because, among other reasons, it is easier to do it that way, it minimizes the risk of challenge, and it costs the States and localities nothing.[92]

Processing Delay: One of the things that critics of the welfare system want to avoid is unnecessary contact between the refugee and the system. They fear that once the refugee accepts benefits it will be difficult to wean him away. Processing delays of four to six weeks, however, lead agencies to sign refugees up for benefits "in anticipation of need, and such anticipation sometimes reduces the probability that a refugee will obtain or retain employment."[93]

Waiver of Categorical Relatedness: The family composition requirements for AFDC eligibility were waived in order to give all refugees equal access to assistance programs. It recognizes that all refugees initially have a great need for assistance that would not be met by existing rules.

> The waiver folds into eligibility intact families, childless couples and single individuals.[94]
>
> The population of welfare recipients that has caused us the most concern are the single, young adults without dependents. Despite our efforts to present objective information about career mobility and salary increases following entry-level job placements a significant number of this group refuses employment.[95]

Alternatives to the Welfare System

The many problems with use of the welfare system for assistance to refugees have led people to explore alternative means of offering interim support to refugees. The Refugee Act of 1980 does not specify the means of providing cash and medical assistance to refugees but leaves the choice to the Director of ORR:

> The Director is authorized to provide assistance, reimbursement to States, and grants to, and contracts with, public or private nonprofit agencies...[97]

Some of the alternative models utilizing government mechanisms are: use of the social security structure, use of the system of unemployment insurance, or development of a separate refugee welfare system that might also serve as a model for general welfare reform.[98] It is also suggested that a nonpublic assistance mechanism might be used.

> The agencies feel it is important to discuss further the testing of some alternate form of interim support other than public assistance for these refugees who are not eligivle for SSI or AFDC. This would allow planning with and for refugees on a case by case basis without initial reliance on the welfare system.[99]

Although I believe that exploring and researching alternatives to welfare is desirable, we should recognize that the other proposals also have problems. Further, it seems that if the specific problems with the welfare system listed above were adequately remedied, that system might function satisfactorily.

> The unemployment insurance system is not geared toward family size, it's not geared toward considering the various income levels of people or their needs in total.[100]

> The existing demands, policies, and procedures of systems such as unemployment compensation or SSI are such as to prevent convenient, efficient adaptation to the needs of refugees. It would be costly and administratively cumbersome to develop a new process to be attached to those existing systems, not to mention the need of educating large numbers of staff statewide as to the nature of the resettlement effort.[101]

> It is impractical for larger states ... with large unemployment, with large Black and Latino populations in need of services, to expect major support from the Department of Labor for Refugees.[102]

Providing assistance through a nonpublic mechanism, presumably the voluntary agencies, would likely try to borrow from the "extremely successful" Soviet Jewish resettlement program.[103] Although there are many features of that program that ought to be in more universal use, it is important to recall the unique features of that program. The Soviet Jewish refugees are resettled by their religious kin, HIAS, and the Council of Jewish Federations; they are settled only in cities where these agencies have cooperating branches; they generally stay put but, if there is secondary migration, it is to other cities with Jewish agencies; and, most important, these agencies are professionally staffed at the local level with a strong centralized communication and monitoring system. Several of the other voluntary agencies can match this bill of particulars, except that agency-refugee kinship would depend on the specific program, but there are several voluntary agencies whose ability to manage an assistance and service system must be doubted. Under the right conditions this is an option to consider seriously for most small refugee movements, but it is not likely to have general applicability, especially in large movements.

Working Within the System: Rather than develop a new system it seems advisable to build on the strengths of the existing system while trying to eliminate some of its flaws. Regarding the five problems mentioned above, remedial action is currently being considered by HHS. I would offer these suggestions and observations:

The Refugee Act of 1980 attempts to deal with the medical assistance link with cash assistance by allowing "the provision of medical assistance... to any refugee, during the one-year period after entry..."[104] If refugees were given automatic eligibility for medical assistance for one year after entry it would completely separate medical needs from the welfare system for that period.

Job refusal, with enrollment in language and training programs, is one of the major problems we face in refugee resettlement. The heart of the problem and its solution lie outside the welfare system. The problem is based on a lack of vocational orientation; resettlement programs that give confusing alternatives to the refugees; the failure to develop peer pressure in favor of employment; the use of ESL and training programs as an escape from reality by refugees and as a warehouse by resettlement agencies that don't know what to do next; a lack of coordinated resettlement; and the refugees' not unfounded fear that, in the absence of planned resettlement and resettlement services, the jobs will be dead-end. Some of these problems were partly addressed in the prior section of this chapter and the remainder are addressed in the next section.

Nonetheless there are some specific steps that can be taken within the welfare system:

> Prescribe a time-limit during which a refugee could remain eligible for assistance based on enrollment in approved training.[105]

It should be required that any training beyond an initial course be approved by the local voluntary resettlement agency as a necessary component of a refugee's employability plan. The existing system has sanctions for job refusal; these must be enforced and ought to be monitored by the voluntary agencies in cooperation with local public assistance offices.

The failure of state government to monitor assistance expenditures is partly due to avarice inspired by the availability of Federal reimbursement, but it is also a reflection of serious disinterest and indifference in refugee problems. Although a few state governments have excellent programs, many others lack programs despite sizeable refugee inflows exceeding one-third of a million people in just one year. In many of the latter states there is no knowledge of refugees and interest only in being reimbursed for as long as possible.

State governments have pressed recently for better cooperation with voluntary agencies.

> Better communication and coordination between state and local governments and the voluntary agencies are critical to the implementation of the state refugee resettlement program.[106]

One way to instill a cooperative spirit might be for State welfare agencies to be required to notify the appropriate local or national voluntary agency when granting cash assistance to a refugee.

It must also be recognized that the states have a great burden on them. They have to administer the Federal policies but are provided inadequate staff, and the policies have been such a patchwork as to make enforcement difficult.

The problem of the four- to six-week delay between application for welfare and receipt of payments which leads to anticipatory applications should not be insurmountable. If an expedited application processing, perhaps based on presumptive eligibility, is not possible, then a revolving fund administered by the voluntary agencies ought to allow more patience before applying for welfare.

Lastly, there appears to be near agreement forming on the "waiver of categorical relatedness." Granted that assistance is clearly needed even by single individuals and childless couples for the first six months or so, after that period they should be job-ready and given a strong incentive to work. Limiting the waiver period to the first 12 or 18 months would still provide these refugees with a head start and could provide sizeable program savings.

These measures are likely to improve the functioning of the welfare system vis-a-vis refugees, but they still beg the larger questions regarding the resettlement program. Why do refugees choose welfare over work? How can the resettlement system articulate and achieve its goals? Until the program starts to function as a coordinated interrelated system, each of its parts will be vulnerable to accusations that it is the root of all troubles.

Realistic Expectations

Most refugees do not know what the future holds in store for them. They have not been through the refugee experience before and thus are unaware of the price they must pay for their flight. The problems of resuming interrupted careers, advancing in a strange culture with inadequate language and inappropriate training, having to start over again in competition with those much younger and native, all of these handicaps will impede the refugee's progress. Refugees, however, are prone to optimism and hope. They have been through the worst, the gods have attacked and failed, lightning does not strike twice, they are charmed and lucky, everything will be all right.

Refugees do not know what to expect of their new society. Everything is strange. They don't know how we live, what we earn, what our work is, how much things cost, whom we admire, what we consider proper and valued. Filled with hope, landing on our shores in a state of euphoria with stories of the "golden door" to the golden land adding to their hopes, refugees are prone to unrealistic expectations about their new life. These unrealistic expectations are fed at every turn by well-meant but harmful incidents.

Few people tell refugees the truth. Few have the ability to tell a newly arrived unfortunate of the rough road ahead. Instead we fill their heads and our hearts with Horatio Alger stories. Refugee camp newspapers have regular features on "Success Stories" and no mention of hard times. Everyone is comforting and reassuring, telling of other immigrants or relatives who made it, and no one plays the role of the crusty old uncle pointing out the hard work and times before "making it" and that "it" looks better in romantic hindsight than it did at the time.

Nowhere in our orientation materials is a realistic picture presented to the refugees. Most refugees receive few orientation materials. Much of the orientation material reaches the refugee through the intermediary of the sponsor, who can be expected to generously and warmheartedly dilute the mild message offered.

The price we pay for failing to tell the truth is the development of unrealistic expectations, high hopes, and unreasonable demands. This will be followed by an inevitable shortfall leading to unnecessary frustration, depression, and aggression. Many refugees who have done excellently in light of their handicaps believe themselves failures when measured by their expectations. In resettlement, unrealistic expectations show up in an unbridled faith in education and training and refugees "who refuse employment opportunities and hold out for, in staff's judgement and experience, unrealistically high starting salaries and opportunities."[107]

> _____ believes their situation can be explained to them with both frankness and sympathetic understanding, and "they can take it."[108]
>
> We "level" with the newcomers and stand with them as they adjust to the realities. We do not wrap them in cotton batting because they will not forever have the shield of protection offered in the beginning by the volags and the government agencies."[109]

It is important in developing realistic expectations not to instill pessimism and hopelessness. Refugees improve their initial situation, they have drive and achieve a great deal of upward mobility in their early years. They don't go as far or high as they might hope but they make progress. We must instill realism without destroying the refugee's drive and high standards.

The problem of realistic expectations is exacerbated when resettlement staff and agencies are confused, when they don't know what they are doing or why.

Coordination

> There is no clearly articulated philosophy on how best to help refugees achieve self-sufficiency.[110]

To be successful a resettlement program must decide what it is going to do and ensure that all workers at all levels strive to achieve the common goal of self-sufficiency. To as great an extent as possible in a multilevel program run by complex pluralistic agencies, we must achieve agreement on the proper means for achieving that goal. Each agency can be given some leeway to stamp its own unique methodology and techniques onto the program, but we must be aware that a common goal is insufficient to achieve a coordinated comprehensive program. There must be agreement on means as well as ends.

There must be a coordinated and comprehensive effort. There must be a plan for all refugees and for each refugee. The different parts of the system must work and pull together. When one agency completes its task it must know what comes next for the refugee; it must not say "I've done my bit" and leave the refugee floundering. A successful refugee program is the sum of its parts.

Despite clear Congressional intent to promote coordination and HHS/ORR regulations in the same direction, we are still far from this goal. The various components of the system often pay lip service to coordination without putting in the needed effort to produce it.

> Of critical importance in this effort are the links and partnerships forged between the private and public sectors. This partnership is equally vital with federal, state and local domestic agencies ...[111]
>
> Effective domestic resettlement of refugees depends on a close partnership between public and private sectors at the national, state, and local levels ...
> State and local governments are fully prepared to meet their responsibility to help refugees become productive, self-sufficient citizens. To do so, however, they require a true partnership with both the federal government and the voluntary agencies.[112]

Despite this desire for "partnership" and coordination we find that most programs are fragmented. A mechanism must be developed to ensure and require coordination.

> The states--and in some cases counties in the same state--follow differing procedures and philosophies in administering public services.[113]
>
> There is a marked lack of cooperation and coordination between local service providers and voluntary agencies. The agencies involved in the resettlement, sponsorship, training, job counseling, and health care of refugees often have little knowledge of each other's program.
> There were isolated examples of joint planning and coordination of services which resulted in better services for refugees.[114]

Why does a lack of coordination exist in the refugee resettlement program? The problem is a matter of structure, and most of all, perspective.

Perspective

Refugee problems are viewed as temporary and unique events. This inaccurate perspective is the most corrosive and damaging element that all refugee resettlement programs must confront. The result of this perspective is incompleteness, things left undone, a failure to evaluate programs, to prepare for the next wave of refugees, to experiment with alternative resettlement strategies, to undertake research, to develop coordination, and to learn from the past. All resettlement agencies at all levels, as well as the refugees, are victims of this perspective.

> Another serious problem ... has been the absence of permanent funding to support resettlement efforts. The temporary nature of the original IRAP program coupled with "last minute" extensions of the program in 1977 and 1978, has precluded effective planning, management, and evaluation. Due to the lack of dependable Federal funding, state and local governments have been required to structure their programs on a temporary basis with a view to eventual termination.[115]

> The assumption that refugee status is clearly delineated, extremely temporary and transitory, and agreed upon by refugee and caretaker society is perhaps the most popular view of the refugee phenomenon, but one which obscures many problems and divergencies.[116]

To illustrate this problem, the Army in an action report on the 1975 Indochinese operation states, "This extensive role in the Indochinese refugee program constituted a unique yet highly challenging chapter in the U.S. Army history."[117] Yet in 1980 two of the Army forts used in 1975 were used again. "After a large encampment of Vietnamese refugees here in 1975 first exposed the jurisdictional 'glitch' the Army failed to agree to accept" corrective measures.[118]

The temporary and unique perspective pervades the entire resettlement system. First of all, most refugee programs, especially those of the government, are staffed by temporary personnel loaned or seconded to the "Task Force." There is no permanent experienced staff to utilize. The inexperienced staff fails to appreciate the complexity of resettlement or to understand the role of other agencies, especially the voluntary agencies.

> Although the [voluntary] agencies are generally confident of producing these additional sponsors ... as they have done in the past, some quarters within the Administration seemed to have panicked ... pressure to go around the agencies and seek resettlement sponsorships through individuals....[119]

The staff tends to be temporary and transitory; the phone number stays the same but a new person answers each month. The former director of the Inter Agency Task Force recommended afterward: "Personnel should be selected and assigned for the duration of the effort."[120] An inexperienced staff, not versed in the history of refugee resettlement, makes incorrect assumptions. Two that constantly recur are that resettlement will be quick and that the program will end soon.

The assumption that the camps will be emptied swiftly leads to pressure on the voluntary agencies to "out process" rapidly to fulfill the prophecy and then recriminations when the agencies are unable to meet unrealistic deadlines. Further, if the camps will close soon (I was told in May 1980 that all Cuban camps would be closed by July 15), then there is no need to establish orientation, recreation, or language programs in the camp.

The belief that the program will end soon is similarly damaging. Historically we have had only one single-burst major refugee exodus in the last three decades, the Hungarian refugee program. All of the others, Cuban, Soviet Jewish, Haitian, and Indochinese, have developed into ongoing programs spread over a number of years. With the belief that the program has a finite limit and will end soon come some undesirable consequences. Many things will go undone or be done poorly; evaluation, research, preparation of written materials, quality control, and so on will not occur. Why bother if the program will end soon? In the Indochinese program quality controls were instituted in 1979; comprehensive regulations are now being written; an Orientation Resource Center and other demonstration projects are being established five years late; support services funding began after a two-year delay; sponsorship problems have yet to be addressed; and now we are preparing to develop coordination mechanisms.

The Refugee Act of 1980 takes major steps to remedy the problem of perspective by providing an improved admissions and funding mechanism and by giving legislative sanction to the Office of the U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs and the Office of Refugee Resettlement in HHS. Additionally, it mandates state governments to develop state resettlement plans and to designate resettlement coordinators. These are excellent steps that have the potential to remedy matters, but their effectiveness cannot yet be evaluated. Permanent staffing of Federal and state refugee offices will eventually produce experienced career professionals who will adopt the long view. It is hoped that some steps will be taken to speed up the process.

Structure

The development of a coordinated comprehensive program is affected by the structure of the existing refugee resettlement agencies, especially the voluntary agencies, state governments, and local education agencies. In examining this aspect of the problem we must keep in mind the question: "What will happen if there are no more refugees?" This is not a rhetorical question but rather is a likely occurrence. We are in the midst of one of the largest resettlement efforts in U.S. history--over 300,000 arrivals in the last year--and one cannot predict that high admissions levels will continue indefinitely. The Refugee Act of 1980 allows a normal flow of 50,000 refugees per year. This is higher than in the slack years of the early seventies, but is it enough to keep everyone busy? Depending on the composition of the 50,000 admitted in any year, certain voluntary agencies, states, and local communities currently on the front lines might find themselves with nothing to do.

Voluntary Agencies

The voluntary agencies claim for themselves the central role in the resettlement of refugees in the United States.

> In essence refugees in the U.S. are resettled by representatives of the American public who have a deep belief in the benefits of helping others to find freedom in the U.S. as they and their forbears where helped.[121]

> Given past performance, the voluntary resettlement agencies are confident that, with continued adequate help and cooperation of the federal, state and local governments, and theprivate sector, they can effectively resettle whatever numbers of groups of refugees the Administration and the Congress permit to enter this country.[122]

In essence they are correct, but that does not mean there are no problems with their performance. The voluntary agencies are a very diverse lot that "have developed many diverse techniques of resettlement" and "distinct patterns and processes" based on the "relative strengths of each agency's constituency" and the "varied local resources unique to the private sector" so that each agency is able "to retain its individuality" yet "work cooperatively" toward "the overall goal of self-sufficiency ... shared by all."[122]

> ... agencies cooperate and coordinate through frequent meetings at local, regional and national levels. The ultimate coordinating group for the ... resettlement volags is the Committee on Migration and Refugee Affairs of the ACVA.[123]

Although this is the view from the voluntary agencies' national offices, it is not always the view out in the field.

> ... services provided to refugees vary because agencies have different approaches and methods to provide services. Sponsor responsibilities vary not only among different voluntary agencies but also among different branches of the same voluntary agency.[124]

The heart of the voluntary agency resettlement system, and the reason why each voluntary agency insists on its uniqueness and individuality, is the use of local sponsors during the initial phase of resettlement to introduce the refugee into the community.

> Local sponsors are backed up by the resettling volags who acknowledge their moral, not legal obligation to help until the refugee is self-sufficient.[125]

The sponsorship system is one of the best parts of the U.S. resettlement system (recently it was adopted by Canada)[126] but it is in need of major changes if it is to respond adequately to the problem of "new" refugees.

> Most voluntary agencies recruit sponsors who are to provide necessary assistance to refugees. Sponsor responsibilities, often vaguely defined, vary not only among volags but also within the same volag in different locations. Sponsors receive little training and most have a poor understanding of their responsibilities as well as those of the volag, refugee, and local providers.[127]

Ad described earlier, the voluntary agencies use a variety of sponsorship models and then back up their sponsors with local and regional service offices. Additionally, many of the voluntary agencies operate government-funded support service offices. The chart following shows the number of agency offices and affiliates in the Indochinese refugee program. As can be seen, they vary greatly in their number of back up offices, from a low of three to a high of almost two hundred offices for USCC, the largest resettlement agency.

VOLUNTARY AGENCY RESETTLEMENT OFFICES[128]

HIAS
Nat'l Office
Local Offices & Affiliates - 52

Church World Service
Nat'l Office
Refugee Officer Contact List - 17

Tolstoy Foundation
Nat'l Office
Regional & Field Offices - 7

International Rescue Committee
Nat'l Office
Resettlement Offices - 15

YMCA
Nat'l Office
20 Local Active Affiliates
Major Affiliates - 4

American Council for Nationalities Service
Nat'l Office
Resettlement Agencies - 22
Local Affiliated Agencies - 4

American Fund for Czechoslovak Refugees,Inc.
Nat'l Office
Regional Offices - 3

Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
Nat'l Office
LIRS Regional Consultants - 38

U.S. Catholic Conference
Nat'l Offices - 2
Regional Offices - 4
USCC Diocesan Resettlement Offices - 184

World Relief Refugee Services
Nat'l Office
Regional Offices - 5
Cooperating Agencies - 6

The difficulties that the voluntary agencies are having stem from their relationships to their local sponsors, the degree of monitoring they do of the sponsors' activities, and the amount of guidance they provide their sponsors. It is not possible to make a single characterization of the voluntary agencies, but some sense of the problem can be gathered by describing the extremes of the two major types of agencies, those using congregational sponsors and those using agency sponsorship.

In the well-run congregational sponsorship programs the sponsoring congregation is assisted by a local or regional social service office that is part of the same religious denomination. The sponsor is given high-quality "how to" printed materials as well as other prearrival advice. The work of the congregation is monitored by the service office and extensive follow-up services are offered. In the best of these programs the local service office is the hub of a comprehensive coordinated community program. The staff of the local office receives a constant stream of program memoranda and participates in conferences and in-service training.

On the other extreme are those congregations that simply receive their refugees. No preparation, no monitoring, no back-up. "Continued monitoring of resettlement progress is the responsibility of the sponsoring congregation."[129] Often in such cases the sponsor is at a complete loss about how to deal with the refugee's problems. It would not be unusual to find both extremes present in the same agency.

In the worst cases of agency sponsorship there is heavy reliance on individual and group sponsors; often the refugee is placed with a business whose primary concern is cheap labor. The staff is inexperienced and receives minimal training, monitoring occurs only if a crisis develops, and the agency sends refugees to areas in which it has no personnel.

In the better cases of agency sponsorship minimal use is made of outside sponsors; the agency itself takes responsibility. The staff is professional (often social workers), uses a casework approach, has in-service training, holds frequent conferences, makes regular reports, and is closely monitored by the national office's roving snoops.

There are two explanations of the variations in agency performance. First, some of the agencies do very well when they stick to their special group of refugees but are unable to handle refugees who are divergent from their expertise and the agency's normal support groups. Second, some agencies have been operating in their unique way for many years. Their techniques have been successful in the past, particularly with traditional refugees, but these techniques need modification to deal with the resettlement challenge represented by the current influx of "new" refugees.

It is important to note that the situation is not static; the voluntary agencies are undergoing change and improvement. Some of these changes are incorporated in the new State Department - voluntary agency resettlement contracts. The new contract with mandatory required services is welcomed by many of the voluntary agencies. Because of the decentralized pluralistic nature of many of the agencies, they historically have had difficulty controlling their affiliates. They have had little choice but to use uncontrolled affiliates because the alternative was to leave the refugees overseas in life-threatening circumstances. The new contract provides a means by which the national voluntary agencies can monitor and direct their local sponsors, and require their participation in coordinating councils.

Despite all the criticism of the voluntary agencies expressed above, we must put their role in refugee resettlement in proper perspective. In their claim to the central role in the resettlement process they have history and current events on their side.

> The roots of the resettlement agencies go deeply into the history of American immigration, pre-dating by generations the present complex web of federal, state, local and private social service programs.[130]

Virtually all of the recent changes in our resettlement system have come from their initiatives. The Refugee Act of 1980 and other reforms started with the voluntary agencies. They have been the refugees' strongest and most consistent advocate. When others are now calling for coordination they are echoing a voluntary agency plea. For a long time coordination was impossible because there were no structures at the Federal, state, or local level involved in resettlement. Often when the agencies have been ready to cooperate their desires have been frustrated by inexperienced government personnel who wondered "what is a voluntary agency?"

> Over two weeks elapsed before the voluntary agencies were approached, much less consulted, about resettlement processing and planning - and then only after a public hearing before the Subcommittee on Refugees and the Chairman's initiative in arranging an appointment between Ambassador Brown and the agencies ... weeks passed before resettlement contracts were pursued with the agencies ....[131]

To return to the question of "no more refugees": Under no foreseeable circumstances will the voluntary agencies desert the field. For most of the voluntary agency staffs working with refugees is not a job, it is a mission, ministry, and calling. Many staff members have been on the job for many years. At the top their experience dates back through the Cuban and Hungarian programs to the immediate postwar displaced persons, and a few old hands go further back. In future refugee emergencies the voluntary agencies' expertise and assistance will be available.

State Coordinators and Plans

The Refugee Act of 1980 and the regulations issued under its authority are directed toward increasing the role of state governments in refugee resettlement. The regulations require development of a state resettlement plan, appointment of a state coordinator, and establishment of state advisory councils in order for a state to receive program funds.

The role of the state governments in refugee resettlement, particularly the Indochinese refugee program, thus far does not offer much hope that they will substantially increase their involvement or produce improvements in the system.

> The wide disparity among the states in their receptivity to the refugees, their management of the resettlement process, and their administration of public assistance makes central planning and oversight a very tall order.[132]

Some states have built exceptional records in serving the refugees. A few have served as resettlement agencies, but only Iowa has done so continuously. Others, approximately 30% of the states, have played active roles as coordinators and service providers. Many, however, have been "uninterested in or incapable of administering an effective resettlement program."[133] They have done little more than pass through Federal funds.

So far the main concerns of state governments, with some significant exceptions, have been to get full Federal reimbursement for as long as possible, and to get information on refugee arrivals. The tone of the requests for this information has given the clear impression that the motivation was not to provide greater assistance but to devise a means of steering refugees away. Regarding reimbursement, Florida lobbyists delayed termination of the Cuban program for almost ten years against the determination of three administrations that it was not needed.

The requirements for a state plan and advisory council are not likely to have a major impact on those states that are disinterested. State officials are too well versed in "compliance" with Federal requirements to let some regulations change their behavior.

> Plans at State and local levels are prepared primarily to comply with Federal requirements, and are not used to provide direction to programs or to measure program impact.
> State councils were aware of, and had reported on, many significant problems in vocational education. However, most were not satisfied with the degree of attention State agencies were giving to solution of these problems.[134]

Although major state involvement in resettlement may be welcome, we must recognize that state programs are vulnerable to political backlash and policy changes. The needs and demands of slightly longer established voters will take precedence over those of refugees, especially in hard times.

Lastly, if there were "no more refugees" what would happen to the program and the expertise built up during the years of service to the refugees? No refugees, no money. It is unlikely that even those states with exceptional records will keep permanent offices operating under such circumstances.

Local Resettlement Agencies

Refugee resettlement takes place at the local level. In the course of resettlement a refugee is likely to pass through several local agencies: his voluntary agency sponsor, the local welfare or social service department, the county health system, a local education agency (LEA) or voluntary agency ESL and/or vocational training program, and other agencies.

> There is a pressing need for the agencies in a community to decide together what services are needed and who will provide them, but in most places there is no mechanism or incentive to do this. Where the state or one local agency has assumed this role, it is sometimes resented by other service providers.[135]

In the absence of coordination the refugee passes from agency to agency with no plan. One agency's philosophy contradicts the other's. Services are duplicated, or not provided because no one is responsible, or provided and underutilized. Refugees are denied services because one agency is unaware of what others are doing. In Albuquerque one agency "has made use of an orientation film developed by ... director of an HEW-funded mental health project...." The largest voluntary agency in town "learned about the film during this interviewer's visit."[136] The interviewer was from Washington. More than once, when visiting service providers around the country, I have told them about programs on the other side of town.

For many service providers refugees are a minor part of their operation. Community colleges providing ESL programs and vocational training institutes have more important concerns elsewhere. "In many places, refugees constitute a small proportion of their caseloads and therefore are a low priority."[137] Many LEA's run their refugee programs with contract personnel. Once the Federal funding ends, the program, the personnel, and their expertise will be gone. Further, although these service personnel are experts in their field of ESL or a vocational skill, they often must turn to the voluntary agencies for cultural, behavioral, relative reunion, immigration, citizenship, and other information about refugee resettlement.

Additionally, despite the need of newly arrived refugees for immediate services, especially language programs, many LEA's run their refugee programs in line with their regular academic schedule. In one region 70% of the LEA's offering ESL programs were closed for summer vacation.

One problem which inhibits the development of local coordinating mechanisms is the level of program funding. Almost all programs are starved for funds and therefore for staff. "...observed incredible efforts on the part of the local voluntary agencies and service providers ... working extremely long hours under constant pressure at low wages ... spend much of their personal time."[138] They are so busy coping with daily emergencies that they have no time to plan, develop, evaluate, or coordinate.

Despite the handicap, many communities have set up coordinating mechanisms to the benefit of the program and the refugees. Some are simple, others complex. The convener or initiator may be a voluntary agency, local public agency, county, or the state. Some way to require and facilitate coordination on a wider scale is vital to a successful national program.

Finally, it must be noted that if there are no more refugees local programs will disappear. The people, however, and what they have learned will still be in place.

Resettlement Roles

In reviewing resettlement programs we must note that the voluntary agencies' claim that they resettle refugees is accurate. Taking the historical view, we find that with the exception of the Indochinese refugee program, and to a much lesser extent the Cuban refugee program, the voluntary agencies resettle refugees with little or no governmental involvement. Under the unwieldly label "non-Cuban, non-Indochinese refugee resettlement program," all other refugees are resettled through the matching grant mechanism. Some public services are used but they are an incidental and minor part of these programs. The voluntary agencies do the lion's share in resettling Soviet Jews, Russians, Czechoslovaks, Yugoslavs, Poles, other eastern Europeans, Ethiopians, Iranians, Haitians, Chileans, Nicaraguans, Salvadoreans, and perhaps, depending on program decisions, the 1980 Cuban expellees.

In designing future coordination mechanisms and other aspects of the resettlement program we must remember the central and permanent role of the voluntary agencies. State and local government agencies do not have refugee service as their primary mission. They will respond in an emergency but they are unlikely to remain in the field at other times. A new refugee movement, according to its size, composition, and character, will pull some old and some new public agencies into the resettlement program. Voluntary agency involvement has much greater consistency flow after flow.

In recognizing the centrality of voluntary agencies in refugee resettlement we must not overlook the criticisms of their performance, many of which are justified. Some have suggested that HHS/ORR or the states take over refugee resettlement. As indicated above, states have an uneven record; some are active, many are indifferent, and their experience is partial. They have not been involved in overseas care or processing or in U.S. camps, and they lack experience in other aspects of resettlement. The track record of HHS thus far does not inspire confidence that they would do better than the voluntary agencies.[139] Refugees are a small part of their overall mission, and we should be reluctant to create another bureaucracy. The criticisms of the voluntary agencies, as with the criticisms of public assistance, should not make us look elsewhere but rather at ways to correct the flaws in their performance. The voluntary agencies have shown flexibility in the past and are capable of dealing with future refugees.

The Need for Consensus

To have a successful resettlement program the resettlement agencies, private and public, must "get their act together." They must decide what resettlement is and stick to their common program or they will be "nibbled to death" by the refugees. The program decisions must be national and they must permeate the system. Local agencies and service providers must conform to a national program and pattern of resettlement. Local variations to meet the needs of particular constellations of refugees and variations to reflect an agency's individuality and uniqueness must be accepted, but they must stay within program limits.

Refugees are survivors. The refugee experience makes many refugees aggressive and demanding. Further, many refugees are suspicious of those who assist them and are always looking for ways to get more benefits. Refugees develop communication networks and rapidly become "street-wise," engaging in comparision shopping and a search for services. Despite their communication difficulties they often develop skills that would put jail-house lawyers to shame. This is not meant as criticism--such behaviors can be vital to survival during flight or in refugee camps. In resettlement, these behaviors are undesirable when used to "beat the system." They can be functional and successful behaviors if directed within the system.

If the resettlement agencies are confused about what they are doing, if they contradict one another, and if they offer a mix of services and alternative paths to self-sufficiency, then we should not be surprised when the refugees figure out the worst and most expensive, from our perspective, path and mix. If we cannot achieve consensus on how to resettle refugees, then the refugees will design their own system, to our dismay.

> Refugees strongly disagree with this philosophy. While 41% of them took work upon arrival, only 9% of them would advise other refugees to do likewise.[140]

> There is no argument ... over self-sufficiency as the goal ... or over a general definition of self-sufficiency ... The differences are over how to get there.[141]

In the search for a resettlement strategy consensus we must separate refugee issues from other issues that divide us as a society, especially the issue of welfare. Refugees are not the victims of our society but of some other land. Refugees are not poor people but rather a special category requiring special attention. It is wrong to take a "welfare rights" approach to refugees and advocate that they are "entitled" to all of the benefits in the Refugee Act of 1980. They are entitled to a return to self-sufficiency and a chance at equal participation in our society. They are entitled to as many benefits and services as will help them achieve that goal, and no excess.

Refugees have had experiences and have resettlement needs and behaviors that require them to be guided to self-sufficiency. Unlike native Americans using the same system of benefits and services, refugees don't know our language and don't understand our norms, values, culture, or society. Especially in the early stage of resettlement when refugees are prone to switch between euphoria and depression, activity and apathy, hope and despair, when they are "hovering between escaping and assenting to the frustrating circumstances,"[142] refugees have a need for structure and guidance. "In such a situation the autocratic paternalism ... is not only almost a necessity, it is probably beneficial."[143]

Changing Expectations

Although refugees arrive with their own expectations, the strong dose of reality that they receive during the first year of resettlement can alter their expectations and standards. Portes, studying the Cuban refugees, found:

> Individuals take into account a series of other factors ... First they consider the rapidity of the ascent in the United States.... Second, they consider the difficulties of their point of departure in this country.... Third, they take into account an alternative situation which could have been worse.[144]

Ex, studying Indonesians in Holland, notes:

> The simple matter of living from day to day with all its implications was forcing the refugee inevitably to adjust himself to the many circumstances in his new environment, whether he was willing or not.[145]

And Finann found that the refugee community played a major role in changing expectations and approving of activities:

> We shape an image of ourselves appropriate to the expectations of friends and associates as well as to our perceptions of what others expect of us. In this case, the Vietnamese refugees shape an image of themselves which is appropriate to the expectations they feel the Vietnamese community and American society have for them.[146]

Depending on the message given to the refugees, their expectations may become more realistic or more demanding.

Writing about Vietnamese resettlement during their first 27 months in the United States, I noted:

> Relatively unskilled refugees from a less developed country may find that menial, entry-level jobs in the U.S. provide a rise in status and living standards... One early survey found that 71.5 percent of those listed as "other blue-collar" in Vietnam considered their present occupation to be a higher level.[147]

Similarly the TransCentury study commented:

> The Hmong tribesmen appear to be a refugee group with extremely modest expectations, which eases the resettlement process.[148]

Contrast these analyses with a recent report from Minnesota, which some in that state have begun to call "Hmongnesota."

> The basic goals of the Hmong people have been emphasized here in Minnesota. They are an uneducated population. The only way to survive is to be able to communicate and acquire skills. Education means vocational skill development to them. They estimate up to 3 years or more of language training to qualify them for enrollment in skill training programs. This can mean welfare and ESL and part or full time work and ESL ... The prospects are devastating for Minnesota ...[149]

I don't believe that either TransCentury or I were wrong; rather, the way the system operates, not only in Minnesota, has had a major impact on the refugees' expectations and a "devastating" impact on many communities and states.

> Our system has made handouts to refugees very easy. Often it is difficult for refugees to turn down welfare and medicaid in favor of working.[150]
>
> Welfare is for those who cannot make it any other way, not for everyone who does not want a mediocre job!!![151]
>
> The blanket of total government support is more appealing and reasonable than a four- or five-year plan for independence which their previous life experience can in no way have prepared them to comprehend.[152]

Some choices should not be offered to those whose "previous life experience can in no way have prepared them to comprehend" the alternatives. The fault does not lie with the welfare system but with all parts of the resettlement program. Development of a coordinating mechanism or mechanisms must be done with the goal of achieving consensus on a resettlement program and the pattern of resettlement.

Other Issues and Problems

Although the questions discussed earlier in this chapter--front-end loading, ESL, and vocational training; income and medical assistance; and coordination--are the most crucial aspects of a resettlement program, there are other lesser aspects that require consideration. These aspects are of concern during only part of the resettlement program, but the way they are handled can contribute to the overall success or failure of an individual's resettlement.

Orientation

There are two groups, the refugees and the sponsors, who need orientation, and there are two time periods, prearrival and reception, when it needs to be available.

Orientation is the communication of basic facts about one's environment. For refugees and sponsors it encompasses basic societal and cross-cultural information; how to relate to one another--i.e. what is a refugee or a sponsor?; what is happening and going to happen; "do's and don't's" and other daily survival information; what needs to be done and how to do it; and obligations, rights, and responsibilities. The list can be endless.

Orientation can be written, verbal, and/or visual, formal or informal, simple or detailed. In practice in the United States it ranges from nothing at all to formal orientation sessions offered for several days. Orientation materials and programs have two main sources, the national voluntary agency and local community coordinating councils.

The failure to orient refugees and sponsors can have serious consequences. It can lead to unrealistic expectations for both parties, misunderstandings, a failure to develop a functional relationship, missed services and opportunities, delays, poor and inadequate progress toward self-sufficiency, prolonged dependency, and mistrust, suspicion, and rancor.

> Refugees receive little information regarding their rights and responsibilities and have little understanding of American economic practices and social customs.
> Refugees receive insufficient help with daily living skills, Information and Referral (I&R) and interpreter services.[153]

Despite five years of refugee arrivals from Southeast Asian camps, overseas orientation programs are only now being developed. Refugees in camps often have nothing to do and are thirsting for information about what the future holds for them, but this time is not used. Refugees pick up rumors in camp and misinformation from home and arrive with inaccurate knowledge of our society and customs. This increases the burden on the sponsors and communities.

The prearrival period is also of great importance to the sponsors and is similarly underutilized. Sponsors often have a four- to eight-week or longer wait between their assignment of a refugee and the arrival. Of particular importance during this waiting period is the need to get the waiting sponsor together with state and local resettlement programs. This is a period that can be used for sponsor training and capacity building, to warn schools and services of impending students and clients, to improve coordination and cooperation, and generally to prepare. Attempts to get early information on sponsor matches have thus far been blocked by ACVA. The result is that many sponsors don't get in touch with local programs until after avoidable problems develop.

Postarrival orientation of sponsors would not be a problem if prearrival orientation were given. After reception sponsors still have a need for some written materials, especially lists of local resources, but their greatest need is for guidance, encouragement, and inservice training. An effective device is periodic meetings of sponsors in various stages of the process who can share ideas on how to deal with common problems.

The refugees' postarrival needs are extensive, especially for material in their language. The range of subjects that need to be covered is as diverse as our society. Some information needed is local, such as emergency numbers, location of services, and transportation schedules, but most of the information is needed uniformly around the country. A national Orientation Resource Center has just been set up with Federal funding.

Placement Strategy

Over the years the government and the voluntary agencies have used a variety of placement strategies and nonstrategies in the resettlement of refugees. There are two motivations for a placement strategy: first, to avoid impacting certain communities that might end up with a disproportionate share of the refugees, and, second, to create viable refugee communities in areas one might not normally expect. The two motives interrelate: impacted communities, refugee concentrations, ethnic enclaves, ghettos, will act as magnets, drawing in, through secondary migration, refugees placed in isolated circumstances. Viable communities, or clusters, are attractive places in their own right and can offset or resist the pull of more sizable ethnic enclaves. In 1975 a nonstrategy, in terms of the deliberate fostering of refugee communities, was followed by the deliberate dispersal of the Indochinese refugees. Provided with no focus, they were free to find their own, and several communities and states are now impacted.

In advocating placement strategies one recognizes that refugee concentrations are an inevitable and in many ways a positive development. Ethnic coalescence is a common feature of American life and the ethnic community can develop support systems to aid the newcomer. The ethnic community eases the shock of adjustment and transition, it lessens the danger of social and personality disorganization, and it provides a group identity and a network of relationships, assoications, and institutions. It allows the refugee to function while gradually assimilating. Using placement strategies, especially for refugee groups with no prior ethnic focus here, offers the opportunity to partially control the negative effects of secondary migration.

Generally creation of an ethnic cluster requires an unspecified number of people of similar background. The more people the better, and the more similar too. Some cluster efforts simply randomly select members of the same ethnic group, while others try to emphasize family, regional, tribal, city of origin, or other similarities. When there are no major ethnic clusters elsewhere these two factors may be sufficient. To offset the pull of a giant magnet, Miami, for Cuban refugees, the strategy must be to try to enhance the cluster by providing social services, facilitating development of cultural centers and ethnic associations, and paying particular attention to employment opportunities in order to make the new cluster more attractive. Establishing clusters may be more expensive initially, but if it reduces secondary migration there would be long-term savings.

In the Cuban program of the sixties the placement strategy took the form of pressure on the refugees to get them to move away from Miami. Funds were provided to four voluntary agencies for resettlement elsewhere and similar assistance was denied refugees who stayed in Florida. As of 1975 almost three hundred thousand refugees, nearly half the total, had moved to other states. Although there has been return migration to Florida, many of the other Cuban concentrations are doing well.

Church World Service, one of the four voluntary agencies resettling Cubans, used an interesting placement strategy that produced instant communities of Cubans in many American cities. "Flights in Freedom" involved charter flights of Cubans to waiting communities. Each church of the community agreed to sponsor families on the flight. A version of the charter flight program is currently in use by the Iowa Refugee Service Center, which brings flights into Des Moines where sponsors from across the state await their arrival.[154]

In 1962 Grand Rapids, Michigan participated in the "Flights in Freedom" program for the Cubans and in 1975 Grand Rapids set up another placement strategy called the "Freedom Flight Task Force" for the Indochinese refugees. The refugees were not all brought in on the same flight, but plans from the beginning called for bringing in 100 Vietnamese families in groups of ten. The program involved more than just bringing the refugee to the city, it included comprehensive services, bilingual education, and respect for the refugees' culture. The Grand Rapids Vietnamese community is not only stable, it attracts refugees from elsewhere.[155]

The Refugee Community

An underutilized resource in most refugee programs is the refugee community. People tend to do things for refugees, not with them. "Thus it is that aid organizations, for the stated goal of self-sufficiency, run refugee settlements, nurturing dependency rather than independency."[156]

At the start of a refugee movement it is understandable that the new arrivals might not be consulted, but as an ongoing program develops the early arrivals develop strength and knowledge that ought to be used.

> The growing colonies of resettled Soviet Jews and the rise in family reunions might hold the key to any potential for significantly reducing the costs of resettlement and the amounts provided to each family.[157]

Relative reunions in all programs currently exceed 75%. Despite the fact that the refugees have organized many self-help organizations (one study counted 260 Indochinese mutual assistance associations last year),[158] refugees are generally limited to minor roles in resettlement.

> Few Indochinese refugees are involved in program and policy decisions. Most refugees employed by volags and service providers are in staff positions and do not participate in agency decisions. There appeared to be little involvement of Indochinese associations in the development or implementation of services.[159]

Many refugee associations are weak organizations, not much more than social, religious, or cultural clubs. The potential and the willingness to do more exists, but without outside aid to develop their capacities and abilities refugees will be unable to aid their compatriots. Some projects to promote refugee organizations are under way, such as a Soviet Jewish program in Philadelphia and an ACTION program to aid Indochinese associations. One model to aid refugee organizations that is being tried in San Francisco involves a cooperative partnership between an established voluntary agency affiliate and a fledgling Indochinese community-based agency.[160]

Even if the refugee community remains weak there are resources among the refugees that can be used to lower resettlement costs. Especially in relative reunion cases, refugee families can be used in three ways: as an orientation resource to introduce relatives to services and the community; by obligating relatives to give greater financial and/or in-kind assistance to their families; and, in certain cases, requiring "up front" financial payments from relatives. Generally, though, one should avoid putting the whole burden of resettlement on refugee relatives--as in their use as primary sponsors. Although most refugees have some resources, they are insufficient for sponsorship unless the sponsoring family is paired with another sponsor with greater resources.

Health

The responses that have been made to the health needs of the Indochinese refugees indicate the type of problems that can befall any uncoordinated ad hoc refugee program. Without experienced resettlement personnel to foresee problems and to arrange for corrective steps, certain refugee problems can go ignored for years. To this day there is no central source for information on providing health care to Indochinese refugees. The Public Health Service has done a little on some problems, but many personal health needs of the refugees are beyond its mandate.

Without any central information source, individual health practitioners and clinics must each learn on the job, using diligence and ingenuity to diagnose problems and discover the correct treatment. To give a personal example, in 1975 at a voluntary agency's national convention there was a discussion of the problem of refugee parasitic infections. In 1977 I heard it discussed again, and in early 1980 again I heard resettlement workers discuss the need for information. Parasites are not a public health problem but they can be a severe personal problem. After I returned to my university it took a few phone calls to locate some faculty who three weeks later produced a document that has been distributed nationally.[161] In an ad hoc system things are overlooked and left undone.

It is not possible to examine and analyze every aspect of refugee resettlement in this report. Some things must be omitted. The omission of problems in education, housing, mental health, community tensions, unaccompanied minors, and other problems is a reflection of a project deadline rather than of their relative importance.

The preceding analysis will now be used as the basis for recommendations for future refugee resettlement programs.

V

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

In recent years there have been many reports and hearings on U.S. refugee resettlement programs. Most have focused on the Indochinese refugee resettlement program, but a few have taken a wider view. In chronological order, some of these studies are:

U.S. Comptroller General. Evacuation and Temporary Care Afforded Indochinese Refugees. 1976.

Thomas Barnes. Of All the 36 Alternatives: Indochinese Resettlement in America. 1977.

U.S. Comptroller General. Domestic Resettlement of Indochinese Refugees: Struggle for Self-Reliance. 1977.

House Judiciary Committee. Indochina Refugees: Adjustment of Status. 1977.

U.S. Comptroller General. U.S. Assistance Provided for Resettling Soviet Refugees. 1977.

House Judiciary Committee. Extension of Indochina Refugee Assistance Program. 1977.

Robert Davis. Review of Certain Domestic Aspects of Refugee Resettlement in the United States. 1978.

Senate Judiciary Committee. The Refugee Act of 1979, S. 643. 1979.

U.S. Comptroller General. The Indochinese Exodus: A Humanitarian Dilemma. 1979.

House Judiciary Committee. Refugee Act of 1979. 1979.

Congressional Research Service. Review of U.S. Refugee Resettlement Programs and Policies. 1979.

J. Taft, D. North, and D. Ford. Refugee Resettlement in the U.S.: Time for a New Focus. 1979.

U.S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare. Secretarial Report: Indochinese Refugee Assessment. 1979.

House Judiciary Committee. Report: The Refugee Act of 1979. 1979.

Wever Gim and Tybel Litwin. Indochinese Refugees in America: Profiles of Five Communities. 1980.

Interestingly, they are in substantial agreement on what needs to be done, but most of their recommendations are not yet in operation. A great deal of progress, however, has been made. Many of the recommendations made by the Comptroller General, by Davis and Taft et al., and by many individuals during the 1979 House and Senate hearings on the proposed refugee act have been incorporated into the Refugee Act of 1980. Further, a series of Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) policy issues and options drafts have been widely circulated and new program regulations are issued almost every month. By the summer of 1981, it is planned, all refugee program regulations will have been reviewed and revised. Additionally, we are in the midst of major efforts by ORR and the Coordinator's Office to fund demonstration projects, to strengthen the resettlement program, and to develop a more comprehensive coordinated permanent and professional refugee resettlement system in America. Unfortunately, as indicated by the handling of the Cuban expellees and the phasing out of Indochinese refugee mental health programs, we still have far to go.

This report and its recommendations seek to build on the excellent foundation provided by the above studies and by recent reforms to further accelerate progress toward an effective refugee resettlement system. The following recommendations deal with the issues and problems raised and analyzed in the preceding chapters.

The recommendations are not addressed to improving the current refugee resettlement programs, although some of them may have that effect. They are addressed to how we should resettle the future waves of refugees that we are sure will find their way to our shores.

The Resettlement Process and Services

A successful resettlement program requires agreement on the actual process of resettlement. This must be achieved nationally and transmitted to local resettlement agencies. Refugees require many services: English language training, employment services, vocational training, income and cash assistance, orientation and acculturation help, and so on. Unless there is agreement on the process and the bringing of these elements together into a coherent program, there is a danger that service providers will work at cross purposes, fail to provide services, delay adjustment, or handle each part of the program as an end in itself rather than as part of a comprehensive plan.

There is room for local or agency flexibility or diversity, but there must be guidelines that all agencies and service providers are required to follow. Failure to follow an agreed process will produce a confused, incomplete program with workers unsure of their role and responsibilities and of the demands they can place on the refugees.

If we cannot achieve consensus on how to resettle refugees, then the refugees will design their own system. One of the goals of a planned system is to give a clear message to the refugees regarding expectations and behaviors, and to develop refugee community expectations and attitudes regarding resettlement that will provide peer pressure on newcomers to follow the correct path. Particularly when refugees are unacculturated and confused by the choices offered, we must reduce the flexibility of the program.

Recommendations

I believe the following pattern of resettlement, mix of services, and program guidelines will be most effective:

1. The pattern of resettlement should be, first, English language programs combined with vocational orientation and general orientation, aimed at making the refugee job-ready as soon as possible, in approximately six weeks to six months. During this period the refugee will require income assistance.

Second is a period of employment. The low-paying jobs that are available to those with little language ability are likely to require some supplemental cash assistance. The goal in this period is not work for work's sake, it is to get work experience and a work record, to have the acculturation opportunities that exist even with menial jobs, to instill pride and independence, and to improve one's language ability to a level of vocational training-readiness, or to where one can advance on the job. This period should last approximately six to twenty-four months.

Third is the possibility of vocational training. The refugee should not go immediately into training. The delay, until two or three years after arrival, gives the refugee a chance to acculturate, experience and survey our labor market, and make better vocational choices.

2. Refugee services should be front-loaded. The services to be emphasized are English--both survival and vocational--and vocational orientation. The goals are speed and job-readiness. These services must be available on flexible schedules matched to the pace of refugee arrivals. They should be available to the refugees no later than two to three weeks after arrival. Front-loading and its goal of job-readiness are only part of resettlement and must not be viewed as the program.

3. Employment services, counseling, job development, and placement must be available for the duration of the resettlement program. Follow-up of the refugee's progress is especially important during his period of employment. Individualized employment progress plans should be devised with the refugee during the vocational orientation phase and monitored after employment.

4.a. Vocational training during the first period should be provided only for refugees with easily transferred skills and the ability to handle English at the end of the training period.

b. Vocational training during later periods should require vocational-training-ready language ability. Mainstream vocational training, with limited supplemental tutoring or ESL add-on, should be emphasized. Bilingual or native-language vocational training should be avoided unless there is a direct connection to employment opportunities not requiring the use of English.

5. English language programs must be provided for the duration of the resettlement process. Full-time language training should be offered only during the earliest phase. Developing language ability takes a long time. The emphasis should be on language training in conjunction with part or full-time employment. (See Recommendations 36 and 37.)

6. A job refusal should lead to sanctions, specifically a termination of support and services. The refugee should be obligated to accept the first reasonable job available, even if not in his field of work, or not suitable to his interests or abilities, or does not pay enough. Considering

the serious consequences, the termination decision should require the approval of the cash assistance source, the voluntary agency, and, if involved, the employment service. (See Recommendation 12.)

7. The Office of Refugee Resettlement should have discretionary authority to extend the current three-year limit on support services up to five years for refugee groups with special needs.

Income and Medical Assistance

There are two models of income and medical assistance currently available and in use, the first being assistance through the voluntary agencies funded by the matching-grant mechanism. This model is used for all refugees other than Cubans and Indochinese, predominantly for Soviet Jewish refugees. Assistance for Cuban and Indochinese refugees is provided through state welfare systems with full Federal reimbursement of all costs.

Recommendations

I believe that both models should continue to be available. Choice of which to use in the future will depend on the size and composition of the refugee movement.

8. The voluntary agency assistance system should be considered for use with all small refugee flows and for other movements where special considerations--a special connection between the refugees and one or more voluntary agencies, e.g., Soviet Jewish refugees and HIAS, or existence of a stable refugee kin-community prepared to assist, or refugees with English language ability and transferable skills--make its use appropriate.

The Refugee Act of 1980 requires that all refugees be treated equally. An HHS Action Transmittal Draft dated July 29, 1980 provides that matching-grant program refugees are eligible for public assistance if they are no longer being assisted under the matching grant. This has the potential of sabotaging the voluntary agency policy of sanctions for job refusals. The Action Transmittal Draft requires state agencies to verify with the refugee's sponsor or resettlement agency that the refugee is not being assisted, it should go further.

9. Refugees covered under matching-grant programs should not be eligible for other refugee public assistance programs without the approval of their resettlement agency.

There are many complaints about the use of public assistance to resettle refugees. I believe there is no viable alternative to public assistance in resettling certain refugee groups, especially very large movements of refugees, but it is necessary to strengthen the public assistance system's effectiveness. Recommendations 10-15 are aimed at reducing refugee dependence on public assistance:

10. Medical assistance should be separate from income assistance by giving refugees one year of automatic eligibility after entry.

11.a. A time limit of six months should be set during which a refugee could remain eligible for public assistance, dependent on enrollment in approved training. Further enrollment while on public assistance should require development of an employment plan and approval from the refugee's voluntary agency.

b. National guidelines for the hours and content of approved training should be established. The guidelines should be developed by state coordinators in consultation with the Office of Refugee Resettlement and the voluntary agencies. Obviously guidelines must reflect the availability of programs; however, consideration should be given to establishing a national minimum standard and to reducing reimbursement percentages for states that fail to provide acceptable levels of support services.

12. Existing public assistance system sanctions for job refusal should be enforced. Voluntary agencies should be required to notify local public assistance agencies of job refusals. Failure of public assistance agencies to enforce job refusal sanctions should be penalized by HHS, perhaps by reducing reimbursement percentages. (See Recommendation 6.)

13. State welfare agencies should be required to notify the appropriate local or national voluntary agency when granting cash assistance to a refugee.

14. a. Processing of refugee assistance applications should be expedited to reduce the time between application for and receipt of payments.

b. The Office of Refugee Resettlement should fund a voluntary-agency-administered revolving fund for assistance payments to refugees waiting for their applications to be approved. The refugee's first public assistance payments would be used to reimburse the fund.

15. The "waiver of categorical relatedness" should be limited to the first twelve months for single individuals or childless couples.

Voluntary Agencies

The voluntary agencies are the center of any resettlement program. They are permanent and experienced, they have organizations that reach around the world, and, more importantly, they can reach into local communities to tap volunteers and community resources. They also have major problems that need solutions and a need for organizational strengthening if they are to deal with future refugee problems. Most of the voluntary agencies' problems can be solved without outside intervention or resources, although more pushing by the State Department through the resettlement grant contracts would help.

Although there are great variations among the voluntary agencies, the roots of their problems lie in their extreme decentralization at two levels, nationally in their relations with one another, and locally in the relationship between the national offices and their local sponsors and affiliates and also between branches of the various agencies in any one community. I visualize the situation as a wagon wheel that has spokes but no hub or outer rim. Each agency has its own vertical structure, some of which are very weak, and almost no horizontal connections to the other agencies.

To reiterate some of the local voluntary agency problems: there is a lack of local coordination, monitoring of the performance of local affiliates is weak, refugees are sent to areas where the agency has no service office, branches of the same agency often offer different services and follow different resettlement approaches, and voluntary agencies fail to notify states and localities about refugees placed in their area.

At the national level, the agencies meet frequently under the auspices of the American Council of Voluntary Agencies (ACVA) to talk, to agree on a common front to be presented to the government, and to exchange information.

ACVA, however, gives the impression of more power than it actually possesses. It speaks for the agencies but has little operational or policy-making power. It is actually an extremely weak confederation with a tiny dedicated and overworked staff.

Recommendations

I believe that the major coordinating role in refugee resettlement properly belongs with ACVA and that it should make the basic decisions regarding the actual process of resettlement to be followed for future refugee movements. If it proves unable or unwilling to assume these functions, then they must be performed by some other organization, most likely governmental.

16. The Migration and Refugee Committee of ACVA should establish a Refugee Resettlement Bureau with an Executive Director and sufficient staff. The Executive Director, with the approval of the committee, should have the authority to engage on behalf of the voluntary agencies in binding negotiations with the State Department, the Office of the Coordinator, the Office of Refugee Resettlement, and with state refugee coordinators. The Bureau should establish standards and guidelines regarding resettlement services, determine the process, pattern, and approach to resettlement, set standards for every voluntary agency engaging in refugee resettlement, and oversee and evaluate voluntary agency performance, especially regarding agency management, guidance, and monitoring of their local affiliates.

The ACVA Refugee Resettlement Bureau should have minimal operational functions, limited primarily to development of informational materials usable by all agencies and perhaps some technical assistance functions.

The establishment of the bureau would not deprive the voluntary agencies of their uniqueness or their flexibility.

The area of resettlement in which the voluntary agencies most express their uniqueness is in the reception stage, when each uses its varied local resources to introduce the refugee into the community. After the reception stage the role of the local sponsor normally diminishes sharply and most agencies provide the needed follow-up services through offices using full-time, often professional, staff. They have used offices of Lutheran Social Services, Catholic Social Services, Jewish Family Services, International Institutes, YMCA's, national agency established branch offices, the local Council of Churches, community houses, denominational service offices, and many ad hoc or multi-agency arrangements. The characteristics of the better sponsorship and support service programs must become the characteristics of all ACVA agencies.

17. Agencies must increase their control over their sponsors, prepare them to receive refugees, provide orientation materials and other information and guidance, require them to cooperate with other local agencies, and monitor their performance.

18. National voluntary agencies should require their local agencies and sponsors to cooperate with and participate in local and state coordination mechanisms.

19. To facilitate the development of coordination mechanisms, ACVA should designate one agency, presumably the largest, in each community to

act as convener. Participation should be open to all agencies and programs assisting the refugees, public and private. ACVA should consider delegating selection of the convener to state coordinators in states with active programs.

20. The voluntary agencies should encourage their local agencies and affiliates to develop multi-agency support service offices which would serve the needs of all refugees resettled in a community regardless of sponsoring agency.

21. ACVA should provide state coordinators with regular information on all sponsorship assurances made in a state. This information should be made available after the match is made and before the refugees arrive. This will facilitate planning and coordination of service, and will permit prearrival orientation of sponsors when necessary.

22. To encourage refugee clusters and to prevent the placing of refugees in isolated circumstances, the voluntary agencies should not place any refugees with sponsors in locations where the agency lacks a service office or a relationship with another agency's office or a multi-agency office.

23. To further facilitate clustering, the voluntary agencies should develop mechanisms to coordinate sponsorship assurances and placements in order to focus ethnic groups and groups of similar background in a particular area. Consideration should be given to following the model of the "Freedom Flight Task Force," in which areas without refugees first develop

a coordination mechanism, services, and placement opportunities for a number of refugees before they arrive.

The voluntary agencies have been victimized in the past by government funding cutoffs, delays, and fluctuations. This has caused havoc in planning and the loss of valuable staff. The resettlement grant is currently back at its 1975 level of $500 per refugee despite inflation, the added costs of processing and greeting overseas refugees compared to those in continental camps, and the greater difficulties of resettling the most recent arrivals. Further, some of the recommendations made above will be costly, but less so than creating a new government bureaucracy or paying for the long-term costs of haphazard and bungled resettlement.

24. The State Department resettlement grant should be set at $500 per refugee and the amount should be adjusted for inflation since January 1, 1976. To offset the sting of these increased costs, it is suggested that the State Department-Voluntary Agency contract be adjusted to reflect the above recommendations.

25. Consideration should be given to providing ACVA and the voluntary agencies with capacity-building grants and support. The agencies exist from emergency to emergency and are normally unable to spare staff for analysis and reflection.

The National Government

It is not necessary to make very many comments or recommendations on the role of the national government because most of the key reforms are already in place. It remains to be seen how well the new offices will function.

Recommendations

26. The Office of Refugee Resettlement in the Department of Health and Human Services should serve as the informational channel through which all other Federal departments should disseminate their rules, procedures, regulations, and other material. ORR is selected because it is the source of the greatest amount of material. Currently each agency or department uses its own distribution network and only a regular reader of the Federal Register has a chance of staying informed.

27. ORR should give greater authority, responsibility, and staff to its regional resettlement directors. They should have a meaningful input into program decisions. Their regular contact with programs in their region gives them a special and advantageous position. It would probably be advisable to provide the regional resettlement directors with discretionary funds to support region-wide and other special projects.

28. Serious consideration should be given to moving the Office of the U.S. Coordinator for Refugee Affairs from the State Department to the Office of the President. In the recent Cuban influx major decisions were made by officials inexperienced in refugee matters. If the decisions that shape a resettlement program are to be made in the White House, then perhaps the Coordinator should be located there.

29. ORR and the Coordinator's Office are now permanent programs. They

are staffed by people with no prior knowledge of refugees and only recent on-the-job experience. Both offices ought to cooperate on an in-service training program for present personnel and training programs for new staff. Manuals and guidelines whould be developed to assist in the orientation of new staff. The recently established United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees training program might serve as a model.

State Coordinators

Through design of state plans, selection of membership on state advisory councils, and the choice of support-services providers, state coordinators will have the ability and the power to play a major if not a dominant role in non-matching-grant resettlement programs. In addition, they will have the local knowledge and vantage point to keep abreast of all developments in their states. It is imperative that the state coordinators develop cooperative, not adversarial, relationships with ACVA and ORR. To date, many state coordinators have felt left out of most national resettlement policy decision making. They participate in such informal mechanisms as the National Coalition for Refugee Resettlement and the National Governors' Association, but these bodies are often forced into plaintive positions reacting to decisions already taken.

Recommendations

30. The Office of Refugee Resettlement should establish regional councils of state coordinators to discuss regional problems and to make submissions to ORR on policy.

31. ACVA should develop a regular coordination and communication

mechanism with the state coordinators and consideration should be given to periodic joint meetings of ACVA and the state coordinators.

32. State coordinators should be given joint responsibility with ACVA for the development of programs to assist promotion of refugee community organizations and self-help groups.

33. State coordinators should give preference in support-service funding to local multi-agency service centers and to local public and private service agencies that are affiliated with coordinating mechanisms.

Refugees

The refugee community and refugee families should be encouraged and enabled to become more actively involved in the resettlement of their compatriots and kin. Although this is difficult at the beginning of a refugee program, as time passes the early arrivals develop knowledge and resources that should be put to use. In most refugee programs there is a reluctance to perceive a shift in the refugees' role and accept them as participants in their own resettlement.

A related and thorny question is the role of the bilingual technicians, interpreters and other refugee staff working in resettlement agencies. Often they are in the midst of the resettlement process themselves and have divided loyalties. Nonetheless they are the main link between the resettlement program and the refugees. Most agencies and coordinating councils exclude the bilingual staff from policy decision making.

Recommendations

34. Funding should be provided for demonstration projects to seek effective means of enhancing the development of refugee service organizations. Cooperative relationships between established resettlement agencies and refugee organizations should be encouraged.

35. On a case-by-case basis, in relative reunions the resettled family should be expected to contribute to their relatives' maintenance and resettlement. Reunited families should be expected to orient their relatives, provide initial housing, make financial or in-kind commitments, and even provide "up-front" money to defray the cost of resettlement.

National Program Needs

Now that the United States has established permanent government offices to deal with refugee problems and a permanent admission mechanism, it is time to take the next step and prepare for the future. For our own sake and for that of future refugees, it is time to develop a memory, foster research, learn from the past, and develop contingency plans for the next influx.

> It is only through such conceptual clarification of the refugee phenomena, and the identification of recurrent patterns, that fieldworkers in countries of asylum and in the countries of settlement can be provided with advice.[162]
>
> ... there is no single source book summarizing the experience of sophisticated field workers and/or making recommendations for dealing with future waves of refugees.
> The utility of a source book on the mental health needs of refugees would appear self-evident.[163]
>
> This call for an organized body of advice for operational personnel emphasizes the need to look at refugee situations not as individual historical occurences, each distinctly different and circumscribed in its locus and time, but as recurring phenomena, with identifiable and often identical sets of causalities... all of which in the long run affect refugee outcomes.[164]

> This task was made most difficult by the lack of background information and understanding of refugee movements and problems.[165]

Many things can be done in advance of a refugee influx. They are relatively inexpensive and, because they reduce the time needed to start up a program, they can hasten resettlement and lessen long-term costs. If we adopt a system emphasizing initial services to the refugees, then pre- and contingency planning is even more necessary. The United States is in a unique position right now. Because of our generosity in giving refuge to over 500,000 refugees in the last five years we have learned alot. Unless that hard-won expertise is collected and recorded now, the fight will have to be fought again when the next wave arrives.

Five years ago we had hardly a clue about how to teach English as a second language (ESL) to illiterate refugees from developing countries, and the first year of money "went down the drain." We don't know all the answers yet, but huge progress has been made. Bilingual education, refugee mental health, physical health, vocational orientation, orientation, and other aspects of resettlement have made similar strides. These are areas in which we can gather our learning from all over the nation and then send out uniform materials that all can use.

Right now we are on the brink of closing all of the Indochinese mental health programs. That will be a shameful loss, and it will be compounded if we don't bring the key staff together to establish mental health guidelines for the next program. The peril we put ourselves in by lack of memory is shown by the Federal Emergency Management Agency's travails in running the camps for the Cuban refugees. The veterans of the 1975 camps and the 1980 camps also ought to be brought together to suggest how to do it next time.

Refugee research must be supported. It must be research not on the last group or on specific policy questions but in general, looking at refugees everywhere from a broad historical and comparative perspective that views them as recurring phenomena with identifiable and often identical patterns of behavior and sets of causalities. Heretofore, by the time the policy maker asks the question, it is too late to get the answer. If we investigate broadly we can do research that might relieve the suffering of the refugees and assist those who try to aid the refugees.

Recommendations

36. A Resource Center for Refugee Resettlement should be established to provide information, materials, and technical assistance to resettlement service providers. It should serve as the institutional memory of the resettlement program by preserving resettlement materials and experiences and expertise of resettlement staff. Its goal should be contingency planning for the next refugee movement. It should develop materials, lists of questions, guidelines, and other knowledge that would speed reaction to a refugee crisis. Even though the next refugee group may be vastly different from the last, having a plan, knowing the right questions, and seeking answers quickly can improve the response.

The Center should gather and prepare materials in the following subject areas: refugee camp design, operation, and management; orientation; cross-cultural communication; employment services; vocational training; mental health; physical health; housing; education; community coordination; ESL; and other areas.

The Center should cooperate with other centers that have specific skills, such as the Center for Applied Linguistics.

37. Academic research into refugee problems, behavior, experiences, assistance, law, policy, history, causes, and consequences should be supported either through a program of small research grants or, preferably, establishment of a Refugee Research Center affiliated with a university.

Although it is recommended that general research should be permanently supported, there is also a need for certain specific research projects to be conducted soon. They are:

The teaching of English as a second language: what techniques are most effective, how long does it take, what is the effectiveness of afterwork ESL and on-the-job ESL, the intensity of initial programs, ESL for traditional and "new" refugees, and other questions.

The operation, design, and management of refugee camps and the provision of orientation and language programs in camps. Oddly, the leading international consulting firm on refugee camp design is an American firm that has never been used to design camps in this country.

The design and effectiveness of various orientation approaches, especially the use of various media and the effectiveness of different vocational orientation programs.

The sponsorship system: which elements in sponsorship are most effective in servicing the refugees' needs; how can we best prepare for their task.

Vocational training programs: comparison should be made of the effectiveness of mainstream versus bilingual or native language training programs, and these should be compared to the progress of refugees who receive no training or who have had job experience before training.

Lastly, the entire area of employment requires study. Research in the past has been hampered by the lack of data, incomplete data, and data that prevent comparisons of different refugee groups or refugees within the same group who arrived in different waves. The impact of all of the above research questions on employment needs to be studied as well as questions regarding refugee background characteristics, the refugee community's influence, underemployment, refugee expectations, and other factors.

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METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The researcher has been closely monitoring refugee resettlement since 1973. The researcher has interviewed resettlement personnel at all levels, visited several refugee camps and many local resettlement programs, and attended numerous conferences, hearings, meetings, and conventions in the United States, Switzerland, France, Sweden, and England.

The researcher is guest editor of a forthcoming special issue of the International Migration Review on "Refugees Today" and thus has had access to the most recent research on refugee resettlement. The researcher is on the mailing lists, often as a branch office, of over fifty national and international refugee agencies, offices, and organizations.

Letters, see attachment, were sent to approximately four hundred resettlement service providers in the Soviet Jewish and Indochinese resettlement programs. A list of responses is attached.

LETTERS in response to request for information

Agency	Location	Enclosures
HIAS	New York, NY	Yes
Jewish Day Nursery	Cleveland, OH	Yes
Traveler's Aid Society of Metropolitan Chicago	Chicago, IL	Yes
Jewish Federation of Saint Louis	Saint Louis, MO	No
Jewish Federation of the Greater East Bay	Oakland, CA	Yes
Jewish Family Service	Clifton, NJ	No
Memphis Jewish Federation	Memphis, TN	Yes
Jewish Counseling Service	Wilkes-Barre, PA	No
HIAS	New York, NY	Yes
Council of Jewish Federations, Inc.	New York, NY	Yes
The Minneapolis Federation for Jewish Service	Minneapolis, MN	Yes
Jewish Federation of the Greater East Bay	Oakland, CA	No
Combined Jewish Philanthropies	Boston, MA	Yes
The Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland	Cleveland, OH	No
The Jewish Federation of San Antonio	San Antonio, TX	No
Toronto Jewish Congress	Toronto, Ontario	No
Jewish Family Service	Cincinnati, OH	Yes
Worcester Jewish Federation	Worcester, MA	Yes
Jewish Federation of Greater Buffalo, Inc.	Buffalo, NY	Yes

Agency	Location	Enclosures
Jewish Family Service	Richmond, VA	Yes
Jewish Family and Children's Service of New Orleans, Inc.	New Orleans, LA	Yes
Council of Jewish Federations, Inc.	New York, NY	Yes
Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago	Chicago, IL	Yes
Jewish Federation of Saint Louis	Saint Louis, MO	No
United Jewish Fund of Englewood and Surrounding Communities	Englewood, NY	No
Jewish Family Services	Edmonton, Alberta	No
Jewish Children's Regional Service	New Orleans, LA	No
United Jewish Appeal Federation of Greater Washington	Bethesda, MD	No
Federation of Jewish Agencies of Greater Philadelphia	Philadelphia, PA	No
Vista Del Mar Child-Care Service	Los Angeles, CA	No
Jewish Family Service of Central New Jersey	Westfield, NJ	Yes
Jewish Welfare Federation, Inc.	Indianapolis, IN	Yes
Jewish Family and Children's Service of Palm Beach Country	West Palm Beach, FL	No
National Association of Jewish Vocational Services	Washington, DC	Yes
Jewish Family and Vocational Service	Louisville, KY	Yes
Jewish Family Service	Memphis, TN	No
Jewish Family and Children's Service	Milwaukee, WI	No
Department of Public Welfare, State of Minnesota	St. Paul, MN	Yes
City School District--Career, Occupational & Continuing Education	Rochester, NY	Yes

Agency	Location	Enclosures
Los Angeles City Unified School District	Los Angeles, CA	No
Catholic Charities	Spokane, WA	Yes
United Catholic Social Services	Omaha, NE	Yes
Special Programs and Evaluation	Syracuse, NY	Yes
Catholic Family and Children's Services, Inc.	San Antonio, TX	No
International Institute	Bridgeport, CT	Yes
Indochinese Community Health and Education Project	San Diego, CA	Yes
Associated Catholic Charities	New Orleans, LA	Yes
Refugees of Indochina Culture Education	Honolulu, HI	No
Catholic Community Services	Newark, NJ	Yes
Nevada Catholic Welfare Bureau, Inc.	Las Vegas, NV	No
Catholic Social Services, Inc.	Scranton, PA	Yes
Comprehensive Mental Health Center	Savannah, GA	Yes
Migration and Refugee Services	Washington, DC	No
Indochina Program--Kishwaukee College	Malta, IL	Yes
Catholic Social Services	Peoria, IL	No
Indochinese Family Services	Falls Church, VA	Yes
Catholic Social Services	Sacramento, CA	No
Louise Wise Services	New York, NY	Yes
Lutheran Council in the USA	New York, NY	No
Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago	Chicago, IL	Yes